DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Harnessing the Energy within Human Services

a re-conceptualisation of professionalism that incorporates leadership as told through participants' narratives

Walker, Linda

Award date:
2014

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Harnessing the Energy within Human Services: a re-conceptualisation of professionalism that incorporates leadership as told through participants' narratives

Linda Walker

Professional Doctorate

University of Dundee

February 2014

Contents

Linkages between sections one and two of this professional doctorate

Introduction

This professional doctorate is presented in two sections,

-Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) claim for 50%

Evidence of practice and reflective account based on work undertaken prior to starting the programme, matched to SCQF level 12 competencies

-Research study 50%

Empirical research, 'Harnessing the energy within human services: a re-conceptualisation of professionalism that incorporates leadership as told through participant narratives.'

Context

The context of both sections within this professional doctorate is consistent, with all work being located within human services. I have interpreted human services as including professions that work directly with people (service users; patients; volunteers; clients) across the public and third sector. All work is located within a Scottish context although I draw on literature from across the globe. All work is offered at level 12 within the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. Within the RPL claim this has specifically been mapped to the framework characteristics whereas within section two, this is more implicit and I explore this later in this paper.

Focus on Leadership

A key thread throughout this professional doctorate has been a focus on leadership. Within the RPL claim I reflect on my own performance as a leader within the field of practice. I chose to reflect on three distinct and separate national projects I led across Scotland. I matched my own abilities, knowledge and learning to SCQF 12 competencies. Much of this

evidence has a focus on my abilities to work collaboratively within an inter-professional environment, using influence and relationship based approaches to bring about change. I promote a collaborative approach, identifying challenges as well as solutions.

Many of the above themes, for example such as working collaboratively and building relationships with people, are also prominent within section two. Because all the work across both sections is located within a human service context, this is not surprising as there are strong drivers to work collaboratively with others as environments become increasingly inter-professional. The empirical research I undertook in section two points clearly to such environments potentially benefitting from relationship based approaches to leadership. I additionally noted in section one such issues as the importance of clear communication and planning, each of which have been themes throughout section two, both in relation to the process of my research as well as the content.

SCQF Characteristics across sections 1 and 2

Whilst I undertook a specific mapping of the SCQF characteristics in section one, these were more implicitly stated within section two. However, I would like to provide a few examples of specific learning I feel I have undertaken in relation to these characteristics in section two.

-Knowledge and Understanding

In section two I gained a critical, detailed knowledge, through personal research, that makes a significant contribution to the understanding of leadership within human services. Through the literature review I have provided a critical overview in the areas of professionalism and leadership and the relationship one might have with the other. This new knowledge has brought a fresh perspective to these subject areas and this detail has

not only provided me with new learning but, when disseminated, offers the potential of new learning for others.

-Practice

I have learnt a range of new research methods in section two, for example, new paradigm inquiry, narrative inquiry, and a story constellations approach. These have added to previous learning and, across the professional doctorate, I have adopted a significant range of principle skills and techniques of inquiry. I have built further on achievements in section one through demonstrating original thinking and new conceptual ideas in section two.

-Generic cognitive Skills

Through the adoption of a critical approach to the existing concepts of leadership and professionalism, I have presented innovative ideas within the findings in section two. This has been possible through undertaking a rigorous research process which I have followed with integrity. I therefore suggest I have re-conceptualised and offer original, creative new insights into how organisations might approach the development of leadership. I do not claim my findings are out-with the realms of other thinkers and researchers but rather that they provide another unique perspective to add to a growing body of knowledge about these subjects.

-Communication, ICT and numeracy skills

Whilst recognising communication as a strength within section one, I have nonetheless developed new areas of skill within section two. A key learning area for me has been the use of NVivo9 to collate and support the analysis of my findings. This was invaluable new learning which built my confidence as well as being integral to the research process.

-Autonomy, accountability and working with others

Research for a professional doctorate can be a lonely journey. Whereas in section one, I worked consistently on projects with others, using highly developed communication skills, this was less obvious in section two. I have gained skills to work autonomously, gradually believing in my own ability as a researcher and seeking reassurance and scrutiny from others where appropriate. However, as I have suggested elsewhere, my judgement of the degree of support that might have been helpful and enhanced my work further in section two, has not always been accurate. I believe I would have benefitted from further opportunities to gain critical feedback and wider scrutiny and this is a learning point I will return to for future research opportunities. I recognise now that I thrive better within a team and have at times found the 'loneliness of the long distance researcher' hard to adjust to. Despite this, I do recognise the importance for me of achieving an independent piece of work at this level, both in relation to confidence building as well as competence.

Reflections at the end of the Journey

Reflecting at the end of this two part journey, I can now see, not only strong connections between the two sections (which was not an initial explicit aim), but also examples of real learning I have achieved throughout this journey.

I now value more dearly than ever the opportunities I have both been afforded and 'grabbed with open arms' to lead within my career. Much of my RPL is testament to this, where I have led projects which has afforded me rich learning. I have worked in complex environments where I have made mistakes and hopefully learnt from them. I have been privileged to work closely with others to experience the advantages of collaborative practice as well as the pit falls. Much of the work I undertook within

section one was intuitive as I was learning to be a leader 'on the job'. Like participants' within the later study, I may not always have labelled this work 'leadership' at the time. Through personal reflection, much of which has been undertaken whilst progressing this professional doctorate, I recognise this much more fully now and can truly appreciate the value of being provided with and taking opportunities to lead within my career. These opportunities have increased my confidence and strengthened my sense of professional identity. This confidence has now been strengthened within a different arena. The professional doctorate has provided me with another opportunity to lead; to lead my own research project. I recognise I have much to learn about other research methods and approaches but I also appreciate the leap I have made in respect to new knowledge and skills about new paradigm research and the approaches I have chosen to use. I appreciate much more now the importance of, for example, research rigour, ethics, accurate recording, storage of sensitive data and establishing relationships within qualitative research.

I have been able to transfer much of my previous learning to this research environment, such as the importance of good communication, respecting confidentiality, valuing people and careful planning. The skills I identified and adopted in section one, which are enshrined within effective project management, such as good time management, attention to detail as well as having a strategic focus, have all been utilised in section two. I approached participants in the study with respect and have genuinely valued their contribution to this study. I have continued to work full time in a time pressured role yet have largely worked within the deadlines I set myself to complete this research. In many ways I have adopted a project management approach to complete the professional doctorate, working closely within a time-line with phased activity.

Conclusion

Reflection has been a critical aspect of both sections of this professional doctorate. Trawling past practice and reflecting on the learning for section one was an invaluable activity as it taught me to be precise about exactly what I had learnt. The discipline of this exercise, which was harder and took longer than I had anticipated, was a good grounding for section two. Qualitative research can take many guises but it does require engagement at many levels. I chose an epistemological approach that allowed me to draw on the experience of others to help answer the questions I posed. Reflecting back, this was such a privilege because why should people give of their time and energy to explore these issues? I think the clue sits within the findings of the research itself – that professionals within human services generally and genuinely want to 'make a difference'. It is heartening that many include research as an opportunity to bring this about. I just hope in some small way I have done their involvement justice but I can say, it will not be from the want of trying.

List of Tables and Diagrams

Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful and give thanks to all the participants who shared their stories without which this work could not have been completed.

Heartfelt thanks also to my supervisors, Professor Tim Kelly and Dr Gaye Manwaring, who steadfastly steered me through this endeavour.

A big thank you to Dr Karen McArdle who acted as supervisor, mentor, guide and friend and to Grainne Barr who has been inspirational as well as providing first class technical support.

Last but definitely not least, I give particular thanks to my family for their steadfast belief in me and their cradle of love and support that has seen me through this journey.

Signed Declaration

Linda Walker is the author of this thesis; unless otherwise stated, all references cited have been consulted; the work of which the thesis is a record has been done by Linda Walker, it has not been previously accepted for a higher degree.

Summary of Contents

The study is located within a Scottish human service context, with human services being defined as predominantly work directly with people (service users; patients; volunteers; clients) across public and third sector settings. It draws on narratives from six distinct disciplines including social work, education, police, community learning and development, educational psychology and nursing. Whilst participants reflected on their journeys to becoming a professional, they explored how opportunities, both given and taken to lead throughout their careers, may have influenced their understanding and experience of professionalism, professional identity and leadership.

Narratives frequently identified participants' overwhelming desire to enter and remain within human service professions being driven by a social justice agenda, with an inherent desire to 'make a difference'. Participants articulated how leadership opportunities had provided them with greater confidence and an ability to improve standards within their field, often from an early stage in their career. This in turn had often strengthened their sense of professional identity.

Findings suggest participants made very strong connections between the concepts of professionalism and leadership, particularly when leadership was understood as distributed throughout the organisation. Distributed, dispersed, collaborative or 'leadership at all levels' are terms often used interchangeably to describe 'a pooling of ideas and expertise to produce services and leadership energy that is greater than the sum of individual capabilities' (Patterson, 2010:6). This type of leadership therefore, not only recognises the ability of people within non-traditional positions of power or who are not at the top of their organisational hierarchy, to

become leaders, but also recognises the collaborative nature of such interactions.

Based on the findings, a key recommendation suggests that within human service contexts, a re-conceptualisation of professionalism, which incorporates models of distributed leadership, should be adopted. This would have the capacity to unleash latent leadership potential within professionals who want to 'make a difference' and would be like 'pushing on an open door'. It is further argued that such a consideration could support the development of leadership strategies in human services although the author cautions that organisational cultures can both promote or inhibit effectiveness and impact.

Key words: professionalism, leadership, organisational culture, professional identity

Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Focus of Study

Within this study I explore possible connections between the concepts of professionalism and leadership and question whether organisational context and culture has any bearing on these. I have defined professionalism as the conduct, aim or qualities that characterise or mark a profession or a professional person. I question whether opportunities to lead, as part of participant journeys to becoming professionals, have impacted on the development of professional identity. Based on participant narratives, drawn from six separate professional disciplines within human services, I have interpreted 'human services' as including professions that work directly with people (service users; patients; volunteers; clients) across the public and third sector. This sample does not include all potential groups within this sector although it does provide a small cross section including, police officers, educational psychologists, teachers, community learning and development workers, social workers and nurses. These disciplines were chosen because of my own connections with and understanding of them through my professional experience. This study is exclusively located in a Scottish context although I would argue that the findings are transferable to similar contexts elsewhere. Literature to support this study has been drawn from global as well as home sources.

Aims of study

To gain insight into how the nature and practice of professionalism and leadership are understood, conceptualised and articulated by professionals within human service contexts.

To explore possible relationships, particularly between distributed models of leadership, professional development and the formation of professional identity.

To achieve my aims, I initially focused on a set of five research questions:

1. What is the nature of the relationship between leadership and professionalism?
2. What evidence is there of distributed leadership in human services?
3. What is the relationship between professional identity and professionalism?
4. What is the significance of organisational cultures in relation to leadership and professional development?
5. What impact do constantly changing organisational environments have on creativity, innovation and improvement in relation to people and organisations?

Following data collection, I addressed an additional two themes that emerged from the data. These were:

Theme 1 - that the ability to influence appears to be significant to leaders and professionals

Theme 2 - that values and a sense of social justice appear to be significant to leadership and professional development

It is important to state the philosophical position I hold within which this research has been undertaken. Any process of methodological engagement should be predicated on and articulate with metatheoretical commitments. As Cunliffe (2010:1) notes, 'Our metatheoretical assumptions have very practical consequences for the way we do research in terms of our topic, focus of study, what we see as "data", how

we collect and analyse the data, how we theorise, and how we write up our research accounts.'

Within this study I have adopted a social constructivist subjectivist stance. Within this form of social research I have used qualitative methods to collect data in line with this epistemological and ontological stance. From a post modernist perspective, I have focussed upon language, discourse and deconstruction (Symon and Cassell 2012). Qualitative researchers from such an epistemological position dismiss positivist rational certainty in the attainability of epistemic privilege and replace it with a relativist view of knowledge. From a postmodernist perspective, realities are multiple, constantly changing through deconstruction and reconstruction. In studies from this perspective, deconstruction attempts to identify how claims to truth are always the result of social construction and therefore relative (Johnson and Duberley 2000). Whilst deconstruction denies that any text or view is ever stable or settled, it does not offer a road to 'the truth' but rather, just alternative constructions (Symon and Cassell 2012).

Cassell et al (2009) suggest that qualitative researchers have to address three types of research practices for the accomplishment of good research, these being reflective practice, reflexive practice and phroneses. Reflection is described as the researcher exploring the impact of their research with the intention of further learning, upon which future action can be based (Schon 1983). Reflexivity explores how the research can be better understood through a process of questioning and challenging assumptions and practices on an ongoing basis. Phroneses, which is often translated to mean practice wisdom, within research terms relates to a form of value laden knowledge that is drawn upon to respond appropriately within research contexts. Within this research I discuss how

these have been utilised specifically within chapter four with a discussion about reflexivity and throughout, when I offer examples of reflective practice as well as practice wisdom. One such example illuminates both reflection and practice wisdom. This relates to new knowledge gained through the practice of interviewing for the pilot study which resulted in further reflection on this practice with an outcome that the research design was changed.

These approaches are also congruent with my research aims which seek to hear multiple voices from across human service narratives. In relation to this topic of research, I am particularly interested in 'the subtle, the small, the relational, the oral, the particular and the momentary rather than the conspicuous , the large, the substantive, the written, the general and the sustained' (Weick et al (2005:410). Adopting a narrative approach provides a platform for individual subjective accounts to be conveyed, valued and explored. Narrative approaches allow for depth to be explored and difference to be celebrated. Particularly within research with individuals and organisations, narrative approaches are used in a variety of ways, such as exploring how individuals construct identities (Kreiner et al 2006; Mailtis 2009), how meaning is made, shared and contested (Boje 1991; Sonenshein 2010) and how broader organisational narratives are framed (Brown 2004; Hardy and Maguire 2010).

I used narrative as a method of investigation and, drawing on participants' stories about 'becoming a professional', I gathered views about their positive and negative conceptualisations and experiences of professionalism and leadership and asked whether the organisational environment and culture within which they operate had any bearing on their views. I was particularly interested in how they had developed as professionals; what they felt had helped shape their professional identity,

with a particular interest in whether having opportunities within their career to 'lead' had played any part in this.

I have located the study in human services as it is familiar territory to me as a social work professional. Additionally I have sought to add new knowledge to an under researched, yet important area with a view to enhancing my own and others' understandings of leadership development, professional identity and cultural impact.

1.2 Rationale

I present the rationale for this study from several perspectives. Firstly I discuss my own experience of this topic, identifying the drivers that initiated my interest in exploring it further. I recognise a strong personal perspective can have a profound influence both on the process, as well as the findings of any study, so, due to the importance of this issue, I have chosen not to discuss it in depth within the rationale. I do however, return to it within later chapters, where I explore issues of my voice, self reflection and reflexivity more thoroughly.

Further rationales for this study are also presented from a professional and political perspective.

1.2.1 Rationale for this study from a personal perspective

Since qualifying as a social worker in the 1970's, my professional roles have incorporated front line practice, middle and senior management, training, consultancy and academia. In each of these diverse roles I have both been provided with and sought opportunities to lead. However, I have always considered this an integral part of being a professional. Showing initiative, effecting change, positively influencing others, working

collaboratively and finding creative solutions to difficult problems are, in my view, the hallmarks of good professional practice. To this I would add that, in my opinion, an effective professional is a person who has a strong sense of their own professional identity and who can confidently and clearly articulate this to others, for example within an inter-disciplinary context. Also from my own experience, a professional is a person who has a continuing thirst for new learning and seeks opportunities both informally and formally to achieve this. Finally I believe a professional is a person who supports the learning of others through for example, mentoring, coaching, modelling good practice and is a person who upholds and 'lives by' a clear set of professional values throughout their personal and professional life. Within the literature review I present some of the evidence base for these assertions. Within this study I show that many of the qualities, attributes, behaviours, skills and expectation which are inherent in the concept of 'being a professional' are also present in some concepts of leadership. In my view this is particularly true in relation to newer conceptualisations of leadership which are emerging to meet many of the 'wicked' challenges faced by organisations in the 21st century (Grint, 2008). Wicked problems are generally defined as more complex rather than just complicated with no obvious solutions. They fall into a category of problem that has multiple layers of complex variables, each affecting one another. Apparent solutions seem to compound another problem. New conceptualisations of leadership are generally defined as more collaborative and inclusive, using models that value and utilise expertise from across an organisation rather than solely recognising hierarchical power or leadership. Some of these approaches are variously described for example, as distributed, dispersed, 'leadership at all level' and collaborative leadership. Blanchard (2006) has suggested that leadership begins when we start to explore how we might best make a difference. Surely being a professional, particularly within the realm of

human services, is about making a positive impact on or difference to peoples' lives? From my own perspective therefore and as one of several starting assumptions I consider being an effective professional is closely aligned to being an effective leader.

However, potentially there are myriad variables that might impact on why one person may appear to have a deeper internalisation of the concept of professionalism than another. I am, however, particularly interested to see whether one of the factors that might contribute to an individuals' deeper understanding of 'being a professional' could be the opportunities they may have had to be a leader during their career. My own experience of taking on leadership roles, of various sizes, has provided me with rich learning opportunities which have contributed to my own professional development. From this I have deduced that leadership opportunities have driven a growing and embedded sense of my own professional identity and increasingly my experience of both concepts (leadership and professionalism) has drawn these concepts for me much closer together. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory identifies learning as a life-long process where concepts are derived from and continually modified through experiences. I recognise that my own learning has been built in this way through varied experiences which have included opportunities to lead. Such opportunities have arisen from both formal and informal roles where I have, for example, led teams and projects; introduced new ideas; engaged with others to problem solve and influenced both individual and collective change. All these activities have been undertaken within the context of working within both large and small organisations.

My experience has also taught me that the culture of each organisation is different and has had a bearing on my ability and opportunity to lead. An organisational culture is a system of shared values and beliefs about what

is considered to be important, what behaviours are appropriate and about feelings and relationships internally and externally. According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), there is no single 'best' culture. Their research found that it is important for organisations to create the kind of environment or culture where the positive managerial behaviours of listening, coaching, guiding, involving and problem-solving are actively encouraged and reinforced at all levels within the organisation (CIPD 2004). Schein (2010) reminds us that culture is very complex and suggests it operates at three distinct levels within organisations; 'level' meaning the degree to which culture is visible to the observer. This spans from overt 'artefacts' through identified values, goals and aspirations to underlying assumptions that may or may not have been articulated.

In my own experience, organisational cultures can both support or hinder opportunities for people to develop as leaders or professionals, depending on a range of factors such as whether the organisation is willing to listen to their workforce; whether they are prepared to take risks; distribute power; provide potential leadership opportunities throughout the workforce and whether they are open to new ideas and potential change.

From a less personal perspective, I now want to introduce other rationales for this study which are based on political and professional drivers.

1.2.2 Rationale for this study from political perspective

Funded by the Scottish government, within higher education there are strong drivers to support professionalism across many disciplines including those within human services. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education, through their code of practice, encourage

universities and colleges to embed employability skills into curricula across learning programmes with an outcome to enhance professional attributes in the workplace (QAA, 2013). A key enhancement since 2005 has been the development and integration of graduate attributes into Scottish higher education curriculum (Hounsell, 2011).

Professional bodies, which are largely also funded by government, for various disciplines within human services strive to enhance professionalism through ongoing learning linked to registration. As an example, the Scottish Social Services Council, alongside that of similar bodies for other disciplines, has been created to raise standards and protect end users through supporting the creation of a 'confident, competent and valued workforce' (SSSC, 2010).

Although some regulatory bodies have greater independence from government funding such as the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS), irrespective of this, the political rhetoric suggests a professional approach across all public services which promotes high standards of delivery. However, in the current climate of financial austerity, governments are promoting these high standards alongside a call to cut costs. This has brought a backlash to the doctrine that a more highly skilled, and often by inference, more highly 'professionalised' workforce, is required across human services. In the report, 'Transforming Public Services: workforce configuration for social outcomes', it is argued that some sectors of the workforce have become 'over – professionalised' which has caused a skill gap (Accenture, 2006). These arguments suggest the requirement of a more varied workforce with less highly qualified staff to undertake a range of roles. The report argues that change is often hard to bring about due to the entrenched positions of professional groups. Such suggestions as the introduction of classroom

assistants and para-professional social workers (Scottish Executive, 2006) has brought condemnation from professional groups due to being seen as lowering standards and being a threat to professional status.

Within the 21st century, the introduction of new professional bodies have brought many human service workforces closer towards professional status than they have ever been with the introduction of Codes of Practice, a register and the strong expectation of continuous professional development. These raised expectations about continually enhanced performance bring with them a new language of performance indicators, league tables, and outcome measurements. Some argue that being part of an 'elite club' (profession) within the public sector at least, has resulted in more highly regulated, bureaucratic organisations where professional autonomy has been eroded (Cribb, 2001; Scottish Executive, 2006). Despite warnings by some about 'over-professionalisation', developments to professionalise disciplines within human services appear to be increasing. With the introduction of a single force in Scotland the police are currently debating degree level entry to the profession and have introduced a new post graduate policing studies programme with an aim to embed greater research mindedness and a continuous ladder for learning across the workforce (SIPR, 2011). The Neyroud report recently recommended and agreed the introduction of a professional body in England and Wales and within education the Donaldson Report called for a focus on the development and delivery of better-connected education and continuing professional development following initial teacher education and the induction phase through to school leadership. All such initiatives suggest a more regulated, more educated and strengthened professional status (Home Office, 2013; Scottish Government, 2010a).

Throughout human services there are therefore strong imperatives on staff to become professional by gaining qualifications then through an ongoing enhancement agenda. This direction of travel could be seen as an attempt to seek greater power, influence, status and recognition within a privileged professional arena, which will be discussed in greater depth later. On the other hand, it could be interpreted as individuals and groups, particularly within a human service context, seeking to provide quality services in an attempt to 'make a difference' in society.

1.2.3 Adopting a distributed leadership approach

My rationale for focussing on distributed leadership as opposed to wider, more traditional definitions of leadership stems from themes within contemporary literature that suggest heroic, individual leadership has increasingly less currency within current, complex work environments (Northouse 2012). Contexts within which human service organisations operate are complex, changing and require new approaches (Scottish Executive 2006).

In contrast to traditional approaches to leadership, a focus on more distributed models as a topic of research is lacking. Fitzsimons (2011) notes there are few papers that conceptualise leadership emanating from multiple individuals compared with myriad papers on the themes of individual, heroic, most often male, leaders.

The focus of this study is located with a human service context where there are strong drivers for effective models of leadership to take centre stage as mechanisms to enhance practice (Patterson 2010;Pye 2005). Ford (2006) expands this idea by suggesting that both UK government policy and mainstream management literature, 'bear witness to an

increasing and escalating interest in effective leadership as a means to secure employee commitment and thereby enhance organisational performance and the achievement of ever – demanding goals and targets (2006:77). This growing imperative for better leadership has been and continues to be widely discussed within the literature (Collinson and Grint 2005; Exworthy and Halford 1999; Pollitt 1993). However, with 35,000 different definitions of leadership within the academic literature (Dubrin 2000), it is important to define specific approaches.

My epistemological approach to this study adopts a social constructionist subjectivist stance. Within this paradigm, I am particularly interested in the co-construction of meaning and the relational phenomenon between people, context and environment that leads to new thinking and understanding. Whilst all leaders, individual or otherwise, do not operate without interaction with others, it is the particular relational connections that distributed or shared models privilege that I am interested to explore. Models that support greater recognition that leadership is a distributed, shared or collective activity are more aligned to notions of co-construction.

Different conceptualisations of leadership have been identified in the literature to align with different contexts, for example, in professional service firms, leadership has been described as more akin to 'guiding, nudging and persuading' (Greenwood et al 1990:748).Such firms, it has been suggested, should have 'special theories of their own' (Fenton and Pettigrew 2006:102). I am interested therefore to explore whether particular models of leadership, particularly shared or distributed models, are more suited to current human service environments than more traditional models. I am also keen to explore how prevalent such models are across organisations within these contexts.

Words that underpin distributed leadership, such as collaborating, empathy, vulnerability and dialogue, are not seen within traditional positivist epistemologies, being rejected as illegitimate (Fletcher 2004). However, such words sit well with human service contexts and within an epistemological approach that promotes co-construction, challenges power differentials and values diverse discourse.

I have adopted a 'relational-processual' approach as identified by Fitzsimons (2005) which recognises distributed leadership as embedded within ongoing social processes which are already established, leading to leadership practice emerging and changing over time and between the interactions, co-constructions of the players within organisation. These approaches have been widely discussed within much of the key literature which adopts this stance in relation to distributed or shared forms of leadership (Spillane 2006; Gronn 2003). It is similarly contested by those that argue distributed leadership emanates from a team based approach with a school being a unit of analysis rather than a team (Hartley 2010 in Fitzsimons). These two paradigmatic approaches are explored more fully within the literature on distributed leadership in chapter 2.

Whilst 'human services' is not commonly recognised as a term to collectively describe caring services that interact with people across the UK, it is a term in use, for example in America and Australia. Its adoption within this study allows all six disciplines to be located under one umbrella, with a common focus on human interaction. Each discipline sitting under this umbrella, whilst distinct, has a degree of commonality with others which, at a personal level includes imperatives to work inter-professionally, build inter and intra-personal relationships, work within an ethically sound framework and continually enhance practice. Similarly at

an organisational level, human service disciplines increasingly grapple with greater complexity, ambiguity, coupled with a need to respond faster and be more accountable (Gronn 2003). Patterns of inter-dependency shift as organisations seek to find solutions to increasingly complex problems. Researchers have suggested that due to increased domestic deregulation, global economic integration, multiple and competing stakeholder environments and increased rates of change, senior leaders alone do not have enough information to make decisions (Avolio et al 1996; Seers et al 2003). Within the leadership literature, new forms of leadership thinking which have a focus on pooling expertise have been emerging over the last few decades, resulting in a range of new conceptualisations of 'shared', distributed and collective leadership. Other terms such as servant leadership and engagement leadership also have elements of shared power, as well as shared leadership. These and others form a wide range of terms to describe 'shared' forms of leadership and are often used interchangeably which can blur some of their fundamental differences (Fitzsimons 2011).

My rationale therefore to focus on more distributed forms of leadership within this study is due to my epistemological approach of adopting a social constructionist subjectivist stance which allows me to study leadership as a shared activity. Additionally, the range of disciplines within the context of human services provides opportunities for the co-creation of new meaning about shared forms of leadership. Finally, due to complex, ever changing environments across human services, the demand for solutions to increasingly complex problems cannot continue to be located in the expertise of one hierarchical leader. Harnessing the energy of multiple minds to co-construct new thinking has been seen as the way forward (Hamel 2009).

1.2.4 Rationale for the study from a professional leadership perspective

A final rational for this study is based on the current focus on leadership as a concept across all disciplines within human services. There is a broadening range of organisations and bodies identifying leadership as a strategic priority. For example, a recent progress report on the Scottish Social Services Leadership and Management Strategy (SSSC, 2011) noted, not only their own work in this field, but also referred to collaborative ventures on leadership development with NHS Education Scotland (NES), The Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability (SCLD), Scottish Government, Education Services, Coalition of Childcare Umbrella Organisations (CCUO) and the Improvement Service. Similarly other disciplines highlight an emphasis on both internal and partnership working on the theme of leadership which suggests it is currently centre stage as a topic and appears to be particularly associated with enhancement of practice. Based on inspection reports across 32 Scottish Local Authorities, the Social Work Inspection Agency's report, Improving Social Work in Scotland unequivocally asserted leadership had a central role in improving staff morale and that the quality of leadership impacted directly on service outcomes (Scottish Government, 2010b).

There is however still no common agreement about what leadership means; how to build capacity and sustainability; and how to ensure that investment in leadership will have a positive impact on delivery of public services (Patterson, 2010). Positive relationships between leadership and enhanced practice appear to have a limited evidence base and many studies suggest it is a research area that requires significant further study (ESRC, 2009; Patterson, 2010).

Within the social work profession in Scotland, the development of leadership has been linked to professional autonomy which requires social workers to be 'empowered and supported to take well informed decisions, using their professional judgement' (Scottish Executive, 2006:50). Whilst recognising this would need to be within a framework of accountability, it is suggested that autonomous social workers would demonstrate professional leadership within their organisations. This could be seen at odds with the current 'managerial creep' which tends to militate against professional autonomy, favouring a more bureaucratic, hierarchical approach (Cribb, 2001). A form of leadership that would support greater professional autonomy is one which enables 'leadership and effective management at all levels' (Scottish Executive, 2006:9). As described earlier, and I will return to in greater depth within the literature review to follow, dispersed leadership, distributed leadership, collaborative leadership or 'leadership at all levels' within an organisation, is attributed 'with enabling a pooling of ideas and expertise to produce services and leadership energy that is greater than the sum of individual capabilities' (Patterson, 2010:6). This type of leadership therefore, not only recognises the ability of people within non traditional positions of power or not at the top of their organisational hierarchy to become leaders, but also recognises the collaborative nature of such interactions. Within Scottish social services it has been suggested that, 'every front line practitioner should be a leader, challenging and developing practice and looking at opportunities to innovate' (Scottish Executive, 2006:67).

This type of thinking suggests that perceptions about leadership are changing. Less often is the rhetoric about single figure hierarchical leadership but more about dispersing responsibility and accountability more equally and collectively. However, particularly in the current climate of austerity, organisations have been seen to fall back on a greater

'command and control' approach, reinforcing hierarchical structures. From my own experience I know the importance of culture within organisations that can positively or negatively impact on individual and collective professional development, motivation and potential leadership opportunities.

The literature review I undertook sought to explore whether conceptualisations about leadership were in fact changing alongside perceptions about professionalism. I explore how cultures are formed and how these might impact on people and groups, particularly in relation to their growing sense of professional identity. I explore whether there might be any relationship within the literature between professionalism and leadership and if so, how this is being conceptualised. Overall, prior to seeking the views of participants in this study I sought to provide a literature backdrop based on the key issues identified in the rationale, these being leadership, professionalism, professional identity and organisational culture. I have included in this an historical perspective, identifying changes in thinking about these concepts over time. Added to this, much of the current research and literature is located within a rapidly changing global environment which takes cogniscence of a need to rethink strategies due to scarce resources.

My rationale for this study is therefore based on my own belief that professionalism and leadership are linked and potentially can enhance practice, alongside a current surge in interest in both these concepts at organisational, national and global levels. The current climate appears to be ripe to question whether new conceptualisations of professionalism and leadership could be adopted across public services and if they were, could they in some way improve productivity?

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2.1 Scope, Challenges and Structure of the Literature

Whilst there is a plethora of literature about both leadership and professionalism, there appears to be limited reference to both concepts having any connection. It is this potential connection that I am keen to explore further. To begin to engage with these ideas, prior to carrying out and informing my own study, I took a traditional approach (Hart, 2000) sourcing some seminal texts and snowballing from these in relation to both professionalism and leadership. Clearly both these concepts have huge literatures drawn from many disciplinary, philosophical and epistemological perspectives. I have therefore limited and focussed my search mainly to include literature drawn from human service contexts such as social work, education and health. I have drawn on some historical and more contemporary general literature on leadership and professionalism with some mention of management to contextualise the study within these two conceptual frameworks of leadership and management. Leadership and management have been hotly debated over time, being seen simultaneously as both the same and very different concepts. I include some discussion in this literature review to provide historical and epistemological context. In relation to the literature on leadership, I have drawn particularly from contemporary sources specifically focussing on ideas about distributed or dispersed leadership; collaborative leadership and notions of leadership being shared and the responsibility of 'everyone' within an organisation.(Scottish Executive, 2006). This conceptualisation of leadership is gaining momentum as a concept of leadership within organisations that seemingly has the potential to promote innovation, enhance collaborative cultures and bring

about positive change (Spillane, 2006; Gronn, 2003; ESRC, 2009). I am therefore keen to explore understanding of this new direction of travel in relation to conceptualising leadership and its relevance, if any, to professional identity. Additionally and more broadly, I have concentrated on the following themes in relation to leadership; historic and current thinking about leadership and management; old and new leadership paradigms; leadership in organisations and organisational cultures; effective and outstanding leadership and leadership styles, traits, behaviours and skills. In relation to the word 'professional' I have concentrated on the following key themes; definitions of professionals; professionalization and professionalism; power and professionalism; becoming a professional; professional identity; professional ethics and characteristics of professionals.

2.1.1 Definitions of Professionalism and Leadership

One difficulty with the concepts of leadership and professionalism is that for both there appears to be as many definitions as writers and a myriad of different lenses with which to view each concept. Whilst I have narrowed my search areas and topics to contextualise my own study, I am aware that I have excluded more than I have included. This is partly due to the size of the study which does not allow a wider interrogation of the literature and partly, although interesting, I feel further lenses might begin to dilute the main focus. The particular lens I am using aims to illuminate the complexity of the workplace across human services, highlighting some challenges and potential solutions. According to Grint (2008), based on Rittel and Webber's typology (1973), complex organisations generate multiple problems which they categorise as tame or wicked problems. The more complex the problem, the more difficult it is to find the solution. Tame or 'easier' problems are not necessarily

defined as easy but they are solvable, whereas wicked problems frequently have no defined answer and are often intractable. Within today's workforce, there are increasingly more and more 'wicked' problems due to scarce resources, integration of services and complex inter-professional working arrangements, which increases the demand for employees with an ability to operate within complexity. It further requires people who can propose creative solutions, innovate and lead within the workplace. Within Scotland for example, as discussed at an ESRC seminar made up of eminent leadership thinkers, the problems of excessive alcohol consumption, obesity and drug use were all multifaceted 'wicked' problems with no defined answer. Within all these arenas there is a need for strong inter-professional leadership at a range of levels to make some impact even though, as is the case with many wicked problems, there may be no final solution (ESRC, 2009).

2.1.2 Current Literature

The current breadth of literature is intended to contextualise my own study by critically reflecting on both past and current research based on the themes above which will enable me to locate my own research within this vast arena. The themes themselves have emerged from initial and subsequent reading drawn from my search areas which started by searching for literature which connected both concepts. Noting that literature in this area was extremely sparse, I predominantly concentrated my initial search on work within the last 10-15 years, searching topics using the following words or combinations, distributed, dispersed, new and collaborative leadership; new professionalism, professional identity, professional learning and new concepts of professionalism and leadership. Whilst this resulted in some success, I was then required to locate this emergent thinking about leadership and professionalism within wider

historical debates and conceptualisations. It became evident that several new paradigms of leadership have emerged over time with a vast body of literature to support each iteration. Similarly, definitions of not only the concept of professionalism, but also what it means to be 'a professional' and the professionalization of work were strong themes that have developed and been contested over many years. This literature drew me into broader topics, such as professional ethics and the many characteristics that have been promoted as imperative for successful professional practice. Locating my work within this wider historical and more contemporary canvass will provide a context within which I hope my contribution will be seen as both original and complimentary.

Within the review of the literature I discuss the concepts of professionalism and leadership, starting with a short history of each followed by competing understandings of the main areas of focus for this study. I will critique the literature, providing evidenced arguments about key concepts whilst locating this within the wider framework of the study. Following a critical discussion of the separate literatures, I focus on the connections between the concepts of both professionalism and leadership. I discuss emergent thinking about many of the challenges faced by organisations as a result of greater complexity in the workplace, and what solutions are being proposed.

2.2 Professionalism and Leadership

As has been stated, one difficulty with both the concepts of leadership and professionalism is that there appears to be as many definitions as writers yet common definitions are often assumed. Leadership for example, has been summarised by Bennis and Nanus (1986:20)

> *'..like the abominable snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen'*

Similarly, professionalism was described by Flexner in the early twentieth century as 'pretty indiscriminately used' identifying the following as all speaking of themselves as professionals - doctors, lawyers, preachers, musicians, engineers, journalists, trained nurses, trapeze and dance masters, equestrians and chiropodists – which suggests an extremely broad definition (Flexner 1915:153). Crompton (1990) has suggested that contradictions within sociological debates about what constitutes a profession actually reflect wider tensions in the sociologies of work, occupations and employment. More recently, Evetts (1999) has supported a wider definition of professionalism, not making a clear distinction between a profession and other occupational groups but rather describing a profession as a 'knowledge based category of occupations which have undertaken tertiary education, vocational training and experience.'

Lystbaek (2012:2) goes further and categorises knowledge as *the* most important characteristic of being a professional, making the distinction between vocations and professions as,

a. *Vocations* in which what matters is *what works* as this is informed by tradition and personal experience and,
b. *Professions* in which what matters is not only *what works* but also *why and how* as this is informed by general knowledge and technology

2.2.1 One example – social work

Through supporting social work students in my own work I would agree with a definition that suggests the importance of understanding not only

what works but also why and how it works. In a study of seven social work students (Fenton and Walker, 2012) embarking on an extended practice element of their qualifying programme, it was found that although they valued their practical work, which involved intimate caring tasks with service users, they could not articulate the knowledge required to achieve this. Feedback from supervisors praised the high level of their work but in their final written assessments, the students did not draw on knowledge to evidence this, which was not deemed sufficient to raise them from the level of social care worker to professional social worker. They did however report greater feelings of confidence as they became immersed in purposeful practice. Moving from this position to one of greater awareness and understanding would be a sign of 'professional' development.

There are arguments that would question whether social work is a profession at all. Flexner (1915) outlines the conditions of being a professional as intellect, part of a wider disciplinary group, educated, practical, good communicator, self organising and altruistic. Whether this would include social work he considers is neither here nor there. What is important he concludes is 'professional spirit' which he suggests social work has without question. Others both before and after Flexner, have contested this, describing social work as a semi profession yet through the very process of degree level qualification, social workers today are required to think critically, evidence their practice and draw on a wide body of knowledge from research to achieve this. Additionally, they are required to be 'confident and competent' as professionals, drawing on theoretical and research evidence to support their practice (Scottish Executive, 2003).

Whilst definitions of both concepts remain elusive, there are narratives suggesting, albeit often implicitly, that there are connections between each of these concepts. Much of the language suggests similar issues of importance and I will now identify some of these areas.

2.2.2 Professional Identity

Monrouxe et al's (2011) research with 200 medical students from three medical schools in England, Wales and Australia involved 32 group sessions and 22 individual interviews, seeking students' explicit definitions of professionalism. Using discourse analysis, they sought to understand the myriad ways individual students might define the concept of professionalism. They suggest that, 'rather than merely acting professionally, medical students are expected to become professionals' (2011:585). Globally, universities are being put under pressure from government and industry to prepare students for the world of work. This includes them being able to act and perform in a 'professional' manner (Reid et al 2008). Such preparation includes learning professional roles which contribute to the development of professional identity. Monrouxe et al's (2011) work however, concluded there is no single perspective of what medical professionalism comprises, which from the broader literature in relation to other professional groups, I would suggest is true for all professional groups (Yorke, 2011;Trede et al, 2011). But how do professionals develop a sense of identity with their own profession?

Adopting a professional identity is something that appears to take time and emerges incrementally (Hunter et al, 2007). For some this appears to be easier to formulate than others, although it is not clear why this might be. From my own experience with social work students, when they embark on their qualifying programme of study, staff select for 'potential'

which is ideally developed and realised over the course of the programme for those who are successful. Similarly employers recruit for potential, putting in place induction packages to support professional development over time. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), and equivalent regulatory bodies for other discipline areas, recognise this professional journey, putting in place professional development requirements linked to formal registration. In the case of newly qualified social workers, the registration requirements are more stringent within the first few years for novice professionals, recognising the incremental nature of professional identity development. Individuals grow to become professionals, both by acquiring specific knowledge associated with their particular discipline, followed by sets of skills, ways of being and values that are in line with others in their particular profession.

The literature on professional identity highlights the lack of common agreement by authors on the precise definition of the concept however. Paterson et al (2002:6) offer the brief definition of professional identity as, 'the sense of being a professional' but adds that individuals must acquire technical skill, interpersonal skills, professional judgement and reasoning as well as critical self evaluation and self directed learning to be judged as havening such an identity. It would appear difficult therefore, during the stage of tertiary education to develop professional identities in students but rather it might be more realistic to argue they can only 'begin' this process. Further development will occur, or not, dependent on conditions and context, post qualifying and within the workplace. Placements and internships located on many professional degree programmes provide students with rich opportunities to immerse themselves in professional contexts which assist professional understanding and identity. Experiential learning helps to cement

learning and when this is applied within a specific field of expertise or discipline, this has the potential to aid professional 'belonging' or identity.

Some earlier writers have described professional identity from a more individualistic perspective with one describing it as, 'self image which permits feelings of personal adequacy and satisfaction in the performance of the expected role' (Ewan, 1988:85). This moves towards a sense of personal understanding of self which can assess the level of self satisfaction in performance matched to the requirements of the profession. This then suggests a deeper understanding of what might be required to be an effective professional, that of knowing you are doing the things that are consistent with and to the standards of others within your own profession, as well as adhering to your own sense of professional identity. Having a sense that, as a professional, your expected behaviours are congruent with your own values and beliefs which are embodied in your professional identity appears to be important. Di Franks (2008) undertook a study looking at the value-beliefs and expected work behaviour of 500 social workers in America. As a result of the study, Di Franks uncovered the concept of 'disjuncture' – a feeling that has been described by Fenton as 'ethical stress' when values and behaviour are in conflict (2012). Di Franks found that when social workers had to undertake tasks (most often managerial, gate-keeping tasks) which did not feel congruent with their value beliefs, they suffered quite significant ethical stress or 'disjuncture'. Di Franks also found that the opposite was true, when values and actions were congruent, workers felt low or negligible ethical stress. Ethical stress can manifest itself in a range of ways resulting often in feelings of inadequacy or guilt, when for example, a social care worker or nurse cannot provide the level of care to a patient or service user that they feel they are entitled. It can result in workers being physically or mentally unwell, having to take time off work

due to feelings of stress or 'burn out'. This can compound feelings of individual worthlessness, incompetence and low self esteem. Alternatively, when confidence and competence levels are high, the nurse or care worker can gain a stronger sense of professional identity – at a basic level, feeling 'part of' their profession.

2.2.3 Leadership Identity

Whilst acknowledging the paucity of literature that makes explicit links between the concepts of leadership and professionalism, there are many examples of parallel discourses of which identity is one. Similar to professional identity, outstanding leaders have been described as having a strong sense of identity, being 'confident enough to consider feedback and to reflect and see the impact of actions and think about how things may have been done differently' (Lawson and Cox, 2010:8). Both situations appear to require high levels of confidence and ability for people to feel competent and comfortable in their role. This sense of one's own ability, or strong identity, appears to assist effective leaders in shifting the power from self to others as they, 'help to construct opportunities for people to play to their own strengths' (Lawson and Cox, 2010:7). Being confident and helping others become more confident and competent appears to be at the heart of current leadership thinking which would support the leader as enabler. Lawson and Cox's research, commissioned by the Work Foundation sought to examine how leadership enhanced high performance across six private sector organisations including BAE Systems, Tesco and Unilever. Taking a qualitative and grounded approach, researchers conducted 262 interviews, including 77 leaders, with performance data based on a range of hard task, project and financial outcomes against which they could rate the leaders on a scale from good to outstanding. The findings proposed key behaviours

and characteristics inherent in some individuals which, when they came together, would support the notion of an outstanding leader. Whilst robust in methodological approach, this research focussed heavily on the leader as an individual whilst omitting to recognise the influence of the organisational, community and societal cultures and practices within which both leaders and followers exist. By not adopting a systems approach the work suggests greater autonomy of leaders rather than recognising many of the barriers that could be in place due to both organisational and societal constraints. Some of these points, as well as a recognition of individual leadership inadequacies were highlighted, particularly by public sector managers, within the discussion section of the article when one manager commented, 'the regulatory environment may be used by leaders as an excuse to not empower/engage/trust staff or relax control and some managers may not have the confidence to lead in this way' (Lawson and Cox, 2010:10). Whilst not advocating a non systems approach to leadership within human services, nonetheless, this research highlighted some transferable skills across sectors. The model that emerged emphasised issues of empowerment and respect and care for others throughout an organisation, which could be particularly attractive to public sector managers.

2.2.4 Leadership, professionalism and identity

Much of the current debate about leadership still seeks to define what it is, how it works, how effective it is and how to get more of it (Pye 2005). Pye argues the word leadership appears to have a magic quality although others suggest it is at best, continually problematic as a research subject and at worst, not worth the effort of further exploration, (Barnard 1948). In the 1940's there was recognition that, 'leadership has been the subject of an extraordinary amount of dogmatically stated nonsense' (Bernard

1948:81). In the intervening years theorists have continued to debate its worth, approach and significance from a range of epistemological perspectives resulting in 35,000 different definitions of leadership in the academic literature (Dubrin 2000).

Traditional leadership studies tend to assume a degree of relationship with others, described most commonly as 'followers' or subordinates. Such discourses most frequently relate to male leaders with masculine qualities who have greater power than those with whom they interact (Ford 2006). Similarly, although sitting within an alternative paradigm, 'interaction with others' is a key feature of more distributed, shared forms of leadership where collaborative, relational aspects are highly privileged (Spillane 2006; Gronn 2002).

Issues about the type, frequency and quality of the relationships between leader and follower are all debated within the literature on leadership (Lawson and Cox 2010; Kellerman 2008; Pye 2005). The degree of power afforded to or adopted by followers differs depending within which paradigmatic stance a leadership conceptual framework is located. More shared models of leadership suggest greater reciprocation and collaboration whilst traditional, hierarchical leadership models draw more often on 'command and control' approaches where subordinates are 'led' rather than being part of a 'leadership' process. The above identify two ends of a spectrum of thinking with a wide range of conceptualisations and ways of approaching leadership in between. As definitions of leadership are so broad, an understanding of and attempt at shared meaning is an important starting point. The importance of knowing more about the epistemological assumptions of the conversation partners helps to ensure mutual understanding (Venzin et al 1998).

Much recent research about leadership, as well as professionalism and professional identities has been approached from a constructionist perspective as is my own approach (Weick et al 2009; Ford 2006; Pye 2005). Those adopting a more qualitative approach to the study of leadership have been described as discursive scholars, representing a constellation of perspectives united by the view that language does not mirror reality but constitutes it (Fairhurst 2007). This approach suggests that whilst leaders have often been seen as passive receptors of meaning (Foulcault 1980, 1995; Shapiro 1992), when influencing their environment, there is the capacity to bring about transformational change (Fairhurst 2007). Influencing therefore, appears to be a critical element of leadership at any level within an organisation. Professionals have a range of influencing options grounded in professional expertise, political interaction and personal embodiment. However, cultures within which influence can take place determine the level of power and influence individuals are given or feel they can take, either to lead or follow. If 'followers' do not respond to a leader's actions, as intended by the leader, this could be described as a 'random response' (Peckham 1979) or the 'seeds of disorganisation in the organisation of meaning' (Smircich and Morgan 1982:259). Leadership has been described as a social influence which is about sensemaking and common understanding (Pondy 1978; Pye 2005). A social constructionist subjectivist approach attempts to bring this centre stage, recognising the importance of providing a stage where power and objectivity are challenged with a view to creating space for multiple voices to be heard. Within such environments, there is more potential for creative forms of less traditional concepts of leadership to flourish.

'Shared' models of leadership, sitting within such paradigms, privilege environment as a factor that can be influenced although how such

environments are understood will vary due to subjective accounts (Fairhurst 2007). For discursive scholars, endless debates about the definition of leadership are fruitless as they argue, each person who aspires to lead must conceptualise their role with others within any given context (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003; Barker 1997). This suggests each situation is unique and therefore attempts at generalised definitions are futile. These ideas contrast with mainstream leadership scholars who are said to be more concerned with gaps in the literature, inconsistencies and convergence (Staw 1985). Discursive scholars add to the complexity of leadership literature rather than attempt to diminish other approaches. Weick et al (2005:410) highlight this when they comment, '..the order of organisational life comes as much from the subtle, the small, the relational, the oral, the particular and the momentary as it does from the conspicuous , the large, the substantive, the written, the general and the sustained.' The stories within this study add to this body of knowledge from a general discursive approach, drawing on unique rather than generalised perspectives.

Some authors are suggesting that growing recognition of concepts such as distributed leadership within academic literature shows it is 'an idea whose time has come' (Gronn 2000:333 and is no longer, 'the new kid on the block' (Gronn 2001:1). It is suggested however that distributed leadership is still less prevalent than other concepts such as collaborative, shared and collective leadership (Bolden 2011). It has been described as incorporating shared, democratic, dispersed and other related forms of leadership (Leithwood et al 2009). This suggests, as does the definition I have used throughout this study, drawn from Patterson (2010), that distributed leadership is considered as a means of collectively enhancing the effectiveness and engagement with leadership processes. The process and degree of engagement with others to achieve success is

contested, as is whether having collective, shared, democratically driven activity necessarily results in a distribution of leadership (Bolden 2011).

Forms of distributed or shared leadership have further been ascribed as having 'vertical' as well as 'horizontal' distinctions with examples across the literature suggesting a need to recognise, not only formal positions of authority 'dispersed' throughout organisations which enable leadership activity, but also informal, emergent and collective acts of influence (Bolden et al 2009; Gronn 2009).

With new, often quite nuanced concepts of collective leadership emerging, recognition in the literature has also begun to draw attention to shifts in power, as well as potential new professional identity formation (Ford 2006; Bolden 2011). No longer is power exclusively seen as being tied up in hierarchical forms of leadership, allowing redistribution models to come into play. However, there is criticism that whilst attention to this area is being acknowledged by some, it is not yet being sufficiently addressed both within the literature and practice (Brown et al 2000; Hartley 2009; Hatcher 2005). Hatcher concludes for example, that whilst leadership within schools is distributed, power frequently is not. In such cases, distributed leadership is seen as 'given' rather than emerging with the power base still residing within an hierarchical positional role.

Leadership is currently driving public sector reform (Brooks 2000; Currie et al 2005; Gleeson and Knights (2008); Hartley and Allison 2000). The term leadership, as such a mechanism can be problematic due, as has been discussed, the myriad ways it can be conceptualised, understood and actioned. Forms of distributed leadership have been implemented, particularly within public sector educational settings that have been described as 'weak' with little intended impact being realised. This has

largely been attributed to the number of challenges and inconsistencies in how the notion is framed within organisations which have competing institutional forces that often get in the way (Day 2005; Gunter and Rayner 2007; Torrance 2009).

Such institutional forces frequently involve dynamic power struggles as resources, agendas, ideologies and perspective all compete for attention. A study following the introduction of a distributed leadership approach into an Australian police force illustrates some of these points. Gordon (2010) highlights how previous power relations and structures, such as taken for granted realities, historic delineation of relationships and boundaries of discursive actions, conspired to undermine new forms of leadership. Within the Australian study, people and groups who previously held formal positions of power continued to dominate, despite the introduction of a more distributed model of leadership. Gordon argues, 'leadership implies power as much as power implies leadership, and thus leadership innocent of power is leadership ignorantly normalised: Power is always implicated in the discourse and practices of leadership'(2010;283). An topic for urgent further study in this area has been noted as attention to competition between leaders, micro-politics and the rhetoric of partnership with its inherent power imbalance potential (Lumby 2009). Ford (2006) further draws our attention to gendered power differentiations, calling for greater research from a poststructuralist feminist perspective. She argues much of the literature on organisations fails to consider the androcentric nature of organisational life from within which much research and practice is based.

Adding to a more generalised discussion about professional identity formation earlier within this literature review, I now want to address this more specifically in relation to changing conceptualisations of leadership.

Whilst Paterson et al (2002:6) describe professional identity as, 'the sense of being a professional', this naive definition belies the complexities surrounding the term. Professional identity formation is not fixed but rather, emergent, ongoing and a process (Hunter et al 2007). Ford (2006:78) suggests there has been a recent 'avalanche' of interest in studies of identity with organisational studies being no exception. Within this area, some researchers have focussed specifically on how workplace practices contribute to the development of the identities of organisational members (Du Gray 1996). For example, professionals will enter their profession with a range of personal identities but a key determinant of their developing a greater sense of professional identity will be formed by the culture within which they become engaged. A further approach explores the notion that organisations have their own identities. Within this particular study I am focussing on the former approach.

Professionals identify with their profession, articulating this variously as noted in the work of Monrouxe et al (2011), as well as become shaped by both their profession and working environments. Poststructuralist approaches recognise the importance of context, role and power of discourse within organisations in shaping practices and identity. Professional identities are therefore formed and reformed through ongoing discourses, which can be powerfully influential in relation to dominant voices. These discourses and related discursive practices, whatever their epistemological perspective, become the drivers through which individual identities are developed. These discourses provide subject positions for individuals to adopt depending on their world view and the power they are afforded within the system. Such approaches challenge the coherent, unitary, core sense of self that is frequently assumed in traditional studies of identity.

2.2.5 Professionalism and Leadership in Practice

I now examine the literature on professional expectations and explore how these might have any resemblance to characteristics ascribed to leaders.

Paterson et al (2002) recognised that being a professional is, not only about the individual, but also about the perceptions and expectations of others in relation to the behaviours and abilities of that 'professional'. Again a parallel can be found here in relation to leaders, in that there can be no leader without a follower. Kellerman (2008) highlights the importance of this in her book, 'Followship', with followers being described as the real change agents or 'catalysts' within organisations.

2.2.6 Social expectations

Society has expectations, positive or otherwise, of a 'professional' that can have a strong influence on both the individual and the profession as a whole. Frequently society has been seen to have an expectation that different professional groups will uphold a set of values, attitudes, standards and principles and can severely punish those who do not adhere to these standards. Examples include the many disciplinary hearings undertaken by regulatory bodies such as the General Teaching Council (GTC), General Medical Council (GMC) and General/Scottish Social Service Council (GSSC/SSSC). As well as these more formal processes, there is ongoing assessment by society through the media of those professional groups or individuals who, it considers, do not match up to the standards set, real or otherwise, of being a professional. For example, a Welsh primary school teacher was reprimanded by the General Teaching Council for 'grossly overstepping the line' by posting, 'inappropriate and improper' comments on Facebook which was widely

reported in the media (Daily Mail, 2012). Following the death of Baby Peter in Haringay, London, social workers were immediately branded as monsters by the media for allegedly failing to act within their professional role (Guardian 2013).

We have seen therefore, throughout history that some individuals have severely broken professional codes of ethics and transgressed their professional responsibilities through for example, embezzling funds; causing harm and death to patients; lying under oath; placing children at risk of harm and perpetrating abuse. Monrouxe et al's work suggests that certainly in training, medical students have a wide range of perceptions of and expectations about what it means to be a professional (2011). They highlight the complexity related to the concept of professionalism and their work uncovered multiple definitions and understandings of what it meant to these students to be a professional. The research presented this in a table outlining different dimensions of professionalism which revealed 19 different, yet often inter-related perspectives. These included for example, 'professionalism as knowledge', 'professionalism as attributes of the individual' and 'professionalism as rules.' The researchers used discourse analysis with a sample of 200 students from three medical schools in England, Australia and Wales. Connections were explored between pre-clinical and clinical students' understandings of professionalism across the schools. The diverse definitions of professionalism within this study highlighted the wide range of interpretations. This led the team to suggest that to gain greater clarity of understanding, professionalism should not solely be developed loosely through 'informal transition of shared professional values' but that medical professionalism should in fact be formally taught. This analysis is one that I would concur with in relation to other professional groups within human services as internalisation of the concept of 'being a

professional' appears to require many drivers, not least explicit debates about definition. I follow this section with a more in-depth examination of Monrouxe's (2011) research in respect of the discourses used to describe professionalism which the research team themed into four categories. I adapt and use these to suggest further links between the concepts of professionalism and leadership as, although their work was exclusively in relation to professionalism, I suggest their identified themes map well on to discourses about leadership.

2.2.7 Conceptualisations of Professionalism and leadership

Whilst the nineteen dimensions cover a wide range of perspectives on professionalism, which in itself provides an interesting deconstruction of the concept, the authors further themed the students' discourses on professionalism into four distinct categories (Monrouxe et al 2011). Whilst recognising complex discourses are often conceptualised and labelled differently to their own categorisation, they did however offer the following as possible themes, *individual, collective, interpersonal and complexity*. These categorisations help to locate much of the rhetoric, not only within their study, but also more generally across the literature on professionalism, within clear epistemological frameworks. I argue that such categories can also be applied to discourses about leadership and have mapped this analysis in Table 1, Conceptualisation Themes of Professionalism and Leadership, as further evidence of links between the two concepts.

Table 1, Conceptualisation Themes of Professionalism and Leadership

	PROFESSIONALISM	LEADERSHIP
1	**INDIVIDUAL conceptualisations**	**INDIVIDUAL conceptualisations**
	• located within a set of individual attributes • described negatively as 'nostalgic' • does not recognise new waves of thinking about professionalism	• trait models of leadership (Gardner, J. 1989) • charismatic or celebrity leaders (Conger, J. and Kanungo, R. 1998)
2	**COLLECTIVE conceptualisations**	**COLLECTIVE conceptualisations**
	• attributes across whole professions into which societies often invest trust • 'the profession' or a way of 'being professional'.	• leadership as an homogenous entity – 'difficult to define (Northouse 2013:2) • narratives used, such as 'leadership failings' and 'a crisis in leadership' (ESRC 2009)
3	**INTERPERSONAL conceptualisations**	**INTERPERSONAL conceptualisations**
	• attributes of the social interaction between individuals within professions • stem from sociological and social psychological theories • social inter-actionism, communities of practice • shared participation	• 'new, new paradigm' models (Alimo-Metcalf and Albam-Metcalfe 2005) • based on systems thinking interconnectivity of all individuals within a social system (Senge 2013)
4	**<u>Complexity conceptualisations of professionalism</u>**	**<u>Complexity conceptualisations of leadership</u>**
	• professionalism being a dynamic construct of actors and structures shifting over time • complexity recognised as constant conflict, negotiated and re-negotiated across different situational contexts • systems thinking	• leaders at all levels within and across organisations being required to work together (Scottish Executive 2006) • involves complex 'wicked' problems (Grint 2008) • engaging 'collective smartness' rather than 'smart individuals' (Senge 2012)
	Source: Monrouxe et al 2011	Sources: as identified above

1. Individual conceptualisations of professionalism and leadership

Individual conceptualisations of professionalism locate it within a set of individual attributes that reside within the person. It has been described by Hafferty and Levinson (2008) negatively in their critique of such an approach as 'nostalgic' as it does not recognise new waves of thinking that suggest being a professional requires, not only the individual player but also the environment, structures and systems within which he or she works and the interplay between all of these. This would map well with trait models of leadership which largely ignore the importance of followers and the dynamic of collaborative leadership. Leaders as charismatic or celebrity could be categorised as having an individual conceptualisation.

2. Collective conceptualisations of professionalism and leadership

Discourses that focus on the *collective* theme of professionalism recognise attributes across whole professions into which societies often invest trust. Whole professions therefore become accountable to uphold this trust and to monitor actions of the individual and the collective. We talk about 'the profession' or a way of 'being professional'.

This would map onto notions about leadership that suggest it is an homogenous entity, to be replicated across contexts and seemingly understood by everyone. Often rhetoric, particularly in relation to politics, talks about 'leadership failings' and 'a crisis in leadership' without identifying what is lacking and what the solutions might be (Mant, 2010:18). As has been identified, there are many models and ideas about leadership which would make it hard to suggest it is one 'entity'.

3. Interpersonal conceptualisations of professionalism and leadership

The theme, *Interpersonal discourses,* refers to the attributes of the social interaction between individuals within professions. The constructs embedded here tend to stem from sociological and social psychological theories, for example social inter-actionism, communities of practice for example, and arise through shared participation with one another by individuals within professions.

This maps closely to conceptualisations about collective leadership based on 'new, new paradigm' models (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban- Metcalfe, 2005). Similar to the final complexity theme, these are essentially based on systems thinking which recognises the interconnectivity of all individuals within a social system and the importance of the collective, ie all leaders have to have followers as well as the importance of engagement.

4. Complexity conceptualisations of professionalism and leadership

The final theme draws on *complexity* theory, with professionalism being a dynamic construct of actors and structures shifting over time. It recognises complexity through constant conflict, negotiated and re-negotiated across different situational contexts, within and between professions. This is more akin to previously discussed systems thinking where a change within one element of the system has an effect on inter-related parts of the system.

Leadership theories have and continue to evolve over time with developments over centuries including for example, trait, behavioural, contingency, transactional, transformational, shared and engagement leadership models. This maps most closely to current thinking about the need for leaders at all levels within and across organisations to work

together on complex 'wicked' problems (Grint, 2008). It also recognises that within complex environments, engaging 'collective smartness' is a far greater goal than fostering 'smart individuals' (Senge, 1990).

Whilst this mapping is offered tentatively, it does provide further evidence of growing similarities on the rhetoric about both concepts of professionalism and leadership within the current literature. When searching the literature there were times when I had to check whether the article I was reading was referring to leadership or professionalism due to the similarity at times, not only of terminology, but also of epistemological, philosophical and conceptual approaches.

2.2.5 Ethical Approaches

Another area which identifies similar discourses within the literature in relation to the concepts of leadership and professionalism is that of ethics. The 1970s and 80s brought stronger and stronger criticism of professionalism as a concept often couched in arguments about power, elitism and exclusion although the 1990s, according to Evetts (1999) brought a re-appraisal and a more balanced interpretation. Evidence for this comes from the view that professionalism might work to create professional values which restrain excessive competition and encourage collaboration (Dingwall, 1996) and the pursuit of self interests may be compatible with advancing the public interest (Saks, 1995). Over the last decade any such views have continued to gain momentum in debates about both professionalism and leadership as the world struggles to find answers to increasingly complex problems within the 21st century. Many academic and corporate discourses now provide strong support to create organisations that remain globally competitive whilst adopting clear ethical principles. An example of this was a key outcome of a US symposium entitled, 'Moon-shots for Management', which emphasised

societies must, 'ensure that the work of management serves a higher purpose – companies need to articulate a purpose beyond making money' (ESRC, 2009:11). Within the UK it was noted that within this report business schools have been teaching far too much self interest and not enough ethics.

However, whilst a shift towards greater social responsibility and stronger ethical practice might be occurring in some areas, Cribb reminds us that with continued target setting and managerial creep, this is still not the trend in practice within the UK public sector (2001; 2011). Here the emphasis remains on organisations that count, manage and record rather than collaborate, innovate and build relationships. Yeatman (1987:114) first described this as a move from what she called, 'substantive professionalism' towards 'technical professionalism', ie, 'a shift towards defining professional attitudes and actions as those which are narrowly results orientated and which manage resources efficiently rather than those which meet some more value-laden and complex substantive picture of the role of public sector work'

These descriptions do paint a rather black and white, right or wrong picture when the reality is somewhat greyer in colour. My own reality for example, working within large organisations, is that even within highly managerial, outcomes driven environments, there are often large pockets of value driven activity which are sustained by committed professionals.

However, the reality is that organisations throughout history have largely responded to market forces, using intelligence to guide their trajectories. As organisations have grown, they have built empires based on current management thinking which, throughout the twentieth century, largely ignored the need for flexibility, adaptability and fleetness of foot. Many

organisations, both within the public and private sectors, appear to have grown with little regard to upholding ethical principles, with a stronger emphasis on financial gain and perceived efficiency. It is hard for these organisations now to change direction, a bit like a tanker turning in deep water; it can take a long time for new thinking to take effect. Whilst being focussed and efficient in the past, when major change is required, many organisations are now slow to respond to rapidly changing environments which can leave them vulnerable. Many organisations therefore are currently attempting to redefine their purpose and approach to become more aligned with 21st century demands (ESRC, 2009). How human services respond to these challenges is paramount to future effective service delivery.

Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe's (2005) research with a sample of 3,500 managers and professionals at different levels across the UK National Health Service and local government resulted in the development of a 360 degree feedback instrument. They claim this instrument has been found to be sufficiently robust to be transferable across both public and private organisations. Their work has increasingly provided evidence that promotes ethical leadership which supports relationship based approaches across organisations. Whilst this may be the case, some writers have noted strong differences, not only in the cultures of public and private organisations within the UK, but in the quality of their leaders. A point identified earlier and noted by Lustig et al (2010:36) suggests 'Leadership in the public sector may be less adaptable than in the private sector' and they go on to quote the work of the Hudson Highland organisation (2009) based on their work with 1,185 senior leaders in the UK and across Europe. They found that,

- Leaders in the public sector have a longer time horizon, less quick wins and are therefore less able to change direction.

- Public sector leaders are more likely to 'control' through 'rule following' whereas private sector leaders are more likely to 'trust and believe'.
- Private sector leaders were significantly younger than in the public sector (30% under 40 yrs in private sector/10% in public sector).
- Public sector leaders were more highly qualified than their private sector equivalents. Adapted from Hudson Highland Organisation (2009)

Lustig et al's (2010) work on leadership across both public and private organisations does not imply that one is better than the other but rather there are lessons to be learnt from both. It would be foolish to suggest that all models of leadership across the private sector have been wholly successful following the recent economic crisis. However, a notable task for public sector leaders is described as the ability to influence and manage upwards, downwards and sideways, including people within different organisations as inter-professional working practices increase.

Whilst I suggest that many discourses about both leadership and professionalism adopt similar terminology and ideas, the term, management as opposed to leadership has historically been discussed and still appears to be debated. Within some of the literature the concept of leadership is seen as distinctly separate from management, whereas other authors suggest the two concepts are blended together (Lawson and Cox, 2010). I have included this discussion as a way of historically contextualising debates about the concept of leadership and how this might relate to current thinking.

2.3 Managerialism

Mant (2010:18) suggests we are 'obsessed with leadership' within the academic and business communities and the public demand it, despite it being unsure about its makeup. He points out that this is a fairly new phenomenon in relation to leadership, with far more emphasis being placed on the concept of management throughout the last century.

2.3.1 Management and leadership debates

Many authors have suggested in the past that there are differences between what managers and leaders do, quoting the old adage that, 'managers do things right' and 'leaders do the right things'. This infers that managers are 'yes' men and women who follow a predetermined path within their organisation or context, not deviating, innovating or inspiring. It would suggest maintenance, 'business as usual' and a lack of creativity. On the other hand, by doing the right thing, leaders are attributed with a degree of autonomy to decide what is right and to furrow new paths. This suggests therefore they have greater scope for creativity, innovation and opportunities to push boundaries. Of course, by describing these roles as oppositional, much of the literature has sought to defend one or other position. Drucker (1954) is seen as the 'inventor' of modern management within industry, coining the word to describe the activities of men (rarely women) charged with running large post war corporations. Later management theory, education and consultancy have all largely been built on his earlier work. In 1947 he said, 'management is leadership' and was appalled by the over emphasis in the 21st century on leadership as a separate issue (Mant, 2010:19). However, increasingly management became seen as a role descriptor whilst the

qualities of being a leader may or may not be inherent in that role. Certainly Lawson and Cox's model of leadership proposes that outstanding leaders have moved from 'arcane debates about the distinctions between leadership and management and are able to embody both seamlessly' (2010:5). Therefore, seeing leadership and management as two sides of the same coin is certainly gaining momentum again within current literature. Trying to define leadership more precisely however still taxes many writers and the concept itself continues to appear complex.

Whilst debates about managers and leaders has historically ensued, over the last 25 years some of the literature suggests there has been a steady increase in the influence of management throughout the public sector which has been described as eroding individual autonomy and sometimes termed, a culture of managerialism (Cribb, 2001; Scottish Government, 2006). Lawler (2005) highlights how this can clearly be seen, for example, through the introduction of care management in social work which he argues moved social workers' roles from those concerned with relationship building to far less care driven, bureaucratic roles. Additionally, managerial creep has been identified as being driven from the outside through, for example, forced changes in public policy by the state which have supported managerial models in the hope organisations will become more efficient (Clarke and Newman, 1997). This erosion of individual power towards more centralised control, and a greater managerial approach in professional groups such as teaching, social work and health, has led to high levels of dissatisfaction which have resulted in increased absenteeism. Other studies echo Di Frank's (2008) findings culminating in a body of literature very consistent in its messages regarding disjuncture as discussed earlier (Jones, 2001; O'Donnell et al, 2008, Calderwood et al, 2009; Ruch 2011). In this context then, and drawing on Di Franks and others' work, it would appear that to be an

effective professional both personal and professional values, beliefs and practices have to be congruent within a culture that is empowering. This would not only benefit individual health and wellbeing, but also organisational productivity, with less absenteeism as well as individuals feeling positively about their contributions within the workplace. These conditions equally could increase confidence and individuals' increased sense of professional identity. Membership of organisations and professions gives people, 'a distinctive, status enhancing identity...central to how they perform at work' (Walsh and Gordon 2008:48). This does depend however, on how closely people identify and feel congruent with the culture set within their organisation.

Lawler et al (1995) also points out that although the increase in managerialism was designed to bring about greater efficiencies within the public sector, increasingly these have not been realised. He suggests the subsequent (and continuing) emphasis by the UK governments on leadership, which is seen as more flexible and creative than management, is due to the perceived potential of it bringing about greater effectiveness within the public sector. I argue that it will depend on the conceptualisation of leadership adopted within organisations with new models of distributed leadership or 'leadership at all levels' providing the best hope. This suggests both formal and informal leadership roles distributed throughout an organisation, from top to bottom, with a greater emphasis on collective activity as well as harnessing collective wisdom. The important aspect of this is however, not the model itself but the way that leadership is undertaken, not only as a collaborative activity but also as a true engagement of hearts, hands and minds.

I have argued that discourses about professionalism, whilst having little explicit reference to leadership within the literature, nonetheless have much that is implicit.

I briefly offered one analysis of such an implicit connection above adapted in respect to work on professionalism (Moureaux et al, 2011). I now move on to expand on some specific conceptualisations of leadership which have been favoured historically, and for some are still of a contemporary nature. These perceptions of leadership are included to illustrate, not only the diversity of definition and understanding of the concept, but also how both the concepts of leadership and professionalism are complex, contested and adapting to meet contemporary changing environments. Whilst concentrating on the literature in relation to leadership, I draw parallels to similar literature about professionalism.

Some writers approach leadership from an individual perspective, identifying traits and behaviours inherent in a leader's character. These 'born' leaders were seen as people who could inspire and influence others and were and still are often described as 'charismatic' (Lawson and Cox, 2010). The work of Sennett (2008) has described such leaders as having 'antisocial expertise' because they fail to share, nor leave a legacy of improved leadership when they move on.

It has been suggested there are specific and definable characteristics that make a leader successful although lists vary dependent on perspective. Some of these have included being a good communicator, having confidence, acknowledging own strengths, good at forming relationships, being patient and being passionate. Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) identify six specific traits that differentiate leaders from non leaders, these being drive, leadership motivation, honesty/integrity, self confidence, cognitive ability and knowledge of business. Similarly Bennis (2000), following a

study involving 350 private sector multi-national companies involved in management development identified the following as key leadership traits,

- **Building Teamwork**: Builds effective teams committed to organisational goals and results
- **Understands the Business:** Knows the organisation and stays abreast of business and competitive trends
- **Conceptual Thinking:** Conceives and selects innovative strategies and ideas for the organisation; balancing innovation with big-picture thinking
- **Customer Driven:** Strives to create value for the customer resulting in mutual long-term success
- **Focused Drive**: Focuses on a goal and prioritises and harnesses energy to meet that goal; balances focus and drive
- **Drives Profitability:** Achieves shareholder and/or stakeholder benefit by securing cost-effective and efficient operations
- **Systems Thinking:** Connects processes, events, and structures; balances process orientation with mental discipline
- **Global Perspective:** Addresses cultural and geographic differences in driving corporate strategies for competitive advantage
- **Emotional Intelligence:** Understands and masters one's own emotions (and those of others) in a way that instils confidence; balances perception and emotional maturity.

Many of the above characteristics inherent in what is described as effective leaders are also inherent in many programmes of study aimed at developing the professionals of the future within human services. For example, social work and many other human service disciplines within professional qualifying programmes focus heavily on topics such as emotional intelligence, team building, systems thinking and effective

outcomes for service users, customers or patients. These qualities are largely implicit yet fundamental to the development of emerging professionals.

A weakness however of any individualised trait approach is that the lists appear endless. Each study seems to suggest more characteristics, skills and attributes that are required for effective leaders. Whilst such 'lists' may on the one hand be helpful, for example, to begin a dialogue about required skills, they are equally context specific and therefore unlikely to be transferable to all situations. This dilution of focus makes it hard to provide a definitive definition of leadership from this perspective. Another criticism of a trait approach is that locating expectation to succeed within one individual such as a charismatic leader, is unrealistic and feeds into what Mant(2010) describes as strong perceptions by the public of leadership failings. Grint (2008) identified many problems, particularly within the public sector, that are unsolvable or 'wicked' yet as Khurana (2002) has argued, there is frequently an expectation that charismatic or celebrity leaders will solve them.

2.3.2 Cultural and environmental factors

Other writers suggest that leadership does not, and cannot, reside solely within individuals but rather, it is the culture within organisations that provides an environment where innovation and real leadership can and does occur. This latter view promotes the notion that leaders are not born but they can develop and be developed within stimulating environments. One aspect of this study seeks to identify whether opportunities provided or sought by individuals to be leaders, at whatever level within their organisation, can contribute to their sense of professionalism and professional identity. I would argue that leaders are

not born but particular conditions and environments can contribute to shaping their identity both as leaders and as professionals.

An environmental approach is favoured by Hamel (2009) in his article for the Harvard Review, 'Moonshots for Management.' which identified critical paths to achieve effective management for the 21st century. These pathways focused largely on the need to create cultures within organisations that support staff to become more innovative; move from top down models to more emergent thinking; create opportunities for staff to share ideas and make mistakes; eliminate problems created by hierarchy, providing followers with a greater voice and developing climates of reduced fear and increased trust. Such cultures promote a community approach within organisations much akin to the work of Wenger (1998) on communities of practice. Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour. This may be a group of pupils working on a school project or a group of new managers seeking new ways to cope within an organisation. The common denominator is their shared interests. Within organisations such 'community' approaches value individual and group contributions, promoting a sense of belonging. This is identified by Hamel (2009) as creating the most effective conditions for organisational development in the 21st century.

Both writers promote the idea that organisations should encourage cultures that support innovation through shared knowledge within the workforce which works to people's strengths and interests. They advocate seeking the views of front line staff to problem solve those issues for which they have most experience. They suggest continuous feedback from staff, greater transparency and the introduction of, for example, such strategies as 360 degree feedback where views are sought

about individual performance from all levels in the organisation. They advocate for leaders who listen. These new discourses about, and positioning of, leadership within the workplace has been described by Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) as a 'New, New Paradigm' model. Previous new paradigm models of leadership in organisations centred on charismatic leadership (Conger 1989), visionary leadership (Sashkin 1988) and transformational leadership (Bass 1985) with an old paradigm approach concentrating on leadership as a process. Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe's (2005) 'New, New Paradigm' model could be seen as one step in the ongoing evolution of organisational development. As organisations become more complex and resources more scarce, *'Doing more of the same will not work. Increasing demand, greater complexity and rising expectations mean that the current situation is not sustainable'* (Scottish Executive 2006:6).

Whilst the rhetoric about new forms of leadership highlight shared endeavour, problem solving, continuous feedback and increased communication skills, surely these are inherent in effective professionals who seek to enhance service delivery across human services?

2.4 Diverse Approaches to Leadership

Within the last 10 years there has been a plethora of literature identifying global changes within both public and private sector organisations, as well as promoting new ways of tackling these issues from a leadership perspective (Lawler, 2007; Patterson, 2010; Ryde, 2009). For example, Lustig (2010:35) noted that, 'the banking collapse revealed the far larger bubble that needs to be pricked: the debt mountain...this debt will take a long time to purge from the system'. This 'debt mountain' had and continues to have a devastating effect on global markets, negatively

impacting for example, on employment opportunities, housing, service delivery and life expectations on a worldwide scale.

In relation to public sector organisations this means less resources for public spending yet increasingly high expectations from citizens who have enjoyed many years of relative affluence with services on demand. Lustig (2010) argues that due to the debt burden of wealthy nations such as the US and much of Europe, recovery will be slower than for new competitive nations. This will result in strong global competition. Within this context, public sector leadership bridges the aspirations of politicians with the hopes and desires of the public (Ringland et al, 2010).

Yet leadership itself is in crisis. The global turbulence by definition brings new challenges as it churns up old ways of thinking, acting and doing. The linear projections are less likely to be a guide to strategic planning. Thomas (2008) suggests these changes will be enduring with no quick fix and Hamel has called for 'a reinvention of management for a new age' (ESRC 2009:9). Closer to home, many Scottish public and private sector leaders have been negatively affected by the banking crisis with trust in leadership by the public at an all time low in recent years. At a relatively recent gathering of senior HR directors representing Scotland's largest private and public sector organisations, it was agreed that this lack of trust might instigate a potential crisis of confidence by leaders across Scotland (ESRC, 2009). A problem earlier identified by Craig (2003) in her book on Scottish character and the economy.

Some of the literature however suggests that Scotland has enjoyed disproportionate financial benefits (Khurana, 2002) and allowed charismatic or 'celebrity' leadership to grow despite evidence that

suggests this has a potential negative impact on performance (Mintzberg, 2004; Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006).

A similar picture emerged following US deliberations about the future of management involving management scholars, thinkers and progressive CEOs and venture capitalists at which Hamel (2007) suggested the current economic failures are due to previous management foci on self-interest, incentives, neglect of risk management and trust relations, described as 'Management 1.0'.

The rallying call on both sides of the pond appears to be that future management models or 'Management 2.0', should focus less on being financially driven and setting targets and more on 'innovation, employees and other stakeholders' (ESRC, 2009:10).

All this suggests there, is not only a call to change, but also a need to change leadership approaches as doing the same will not do. Ronald Heifetz et al, (2010:99) suggests,

> *'Are you waiting for things to return to normal in your organisation? Sorry. Leadership (senior management) will require new skills tailored to an environment of urgency, high stakes and uncertainty – even after the current economic crisis is over'*

Whilst this suggests that leadership might be the domain of the 'senior manager', the author goes on to say that senior managers should provide opportunities for people to lead at all levels within the organisation. This has been described variously across the literature but as defined earlier in this study, is most commonly referred to as dispersed, distributed or collaborative leadership. Again, I would argue that the conceptualisation of leadership as dispersed suggests that individuals, at whatever level within an organisation, pursue an enhancement agenda which is also

within the domain of an effective professional. Within human services, whilst each professional body enshrines what it means to be a professional within their own Codes of Conduct or ethics, there are certain general themes such as taking a respectful, inclusive approach; being open and honest; upholding high standards; helping colleagues advance in their field; respecting client confidentiality; keeping up to date in the field; being accountable and taking responsibility (SSSC, 2009;SPA, 2012; NMC, 2010; GTCS, 2012). These collectively suggest an approach which requires leadership both in respect of individuals' own practice, as well as supporting the wider profession, with an overall aim to provide increasingly enhanced outcomes.

I now discuss in more detail conceptualisations of distributed leadership drawn from the literature. I include this more in-depth discussion of distributed leadership as this forms the basis of my own position which suggests that conceptualisations of leadership and professionalism are closely aligned. It is a distributed model, rather than a hierarchical one which includes individual charismatic characteristics, that I argue is more akin to professional characteristics.

2.4.1 Distributed Leadership

Dispersed leadership, distributed leadership, collaborative leadership or 'leadership at all levels', within an organisation has been attributed 'with enabling a pooling of ideas and expertise to produce services and leadership energy that is greater than the sum of individual capabilities' (ESRC, 2009 in Patterson, 2010:6). This type of leadership therefore, not only recognises the ability of people within non traditional positions of power or at the top of their organisational hierarchy to become leaders, but also recognises the collaborative nature of such interactions. Within

Scottish social services it has been suggested that, 'every front line practitioner should be a leader, challenging and developing practice and looking at opportunities to innovate' (Scottish Executive, 2006). A main challenge for the whole UK public sector is to deliver improved services through a motivated workforce in an age of austerity. A report by Deloitte for the UK government suggests this will not require more leaders at the top but rather, 'it is about exercising more leadership at all levels' (Deloitte, 2010). They argue this will support future organisational growth due to accountability being shared throughout the organisation, organisational barriers being removed and promoting the growth of leadership across the system.

The literature on distributed leadership is young and modest being drawn predominantly from educational contexts. Nonetheless, it does provide a fresh perspective on leadership following the previous work on traits, skills and behaviours of individual leaders.

Harris warns that within the field of leadership discourse, there is a susceptibility to new leadership terms that are temporarily popular. She goes on to suggest that, 'many contemporary and popular leadership ideas exist without benefit of any empirical research' (Harris, 2007:315). Within this category she would include distributed leadership, describing a, 'chameleon-like quality (which) makes it appealing to policy makers, researchers and practitioners alike, even though interpretations of its meaning clearly vary' (Harris, 2007:315).

Spillane et al (2001; 2004) have undertaken empirical research in schools in relation to distributed leadership focusing on ways in which cognition relies upon certain material, social and cultural artefacts for understanding, for example, cognition is not an isolated mental activity of

one person but pertains to individual sense making through interaction with others and their environment. The environment within which this takes place, although this might vary, is described by Rogoff (1990) as the 'socio-cultural context'. Spillane et al (2001) argue that in relation to leadership in schools, this is constructed and orchestrated not by individuals but through an interaction between leaders, followers and their situation as they undertake a leadership task. Whilst this offers an explanation of the process, a new perspective and a conceptual basis for understanding leadership, Spillane's work appears to fall short on evidence about practical applicability. The authors do not, in fact, claim it is even achievable, offering only that it is a productive way of thinking about leadership for both, 'diagnostic and design purposes' (Spillane and Camburn, 2006:103).

Other examples of more practice based research identifying the distribution and scope of distributed leadership across schools has however been carried out by Spillane et al (2001; 2004), Camburn et al (2003) and Spillane and Camburn (2006). Camburn et al (2003) carried out the largest study in the US focussing on 100 elementary schools and found that leadership roles were undertaken by individuals right across the school. Further research has concluded that, 'the work of leading and managing the schoolhouse is indeed distributed, not only involving multiple designated leaders and informal leaders but also demonstrated by the prevalence of the co-performance of the work' (Spillane and Camburn, 2006:26). This definition of success indicates distributed leadership, within this context anyway, involves 'designated and informal leaders' and incorporates an element of 'co-performance' or collaboration.

Another piece of research, using survey data collected from 2500 US teachers and their managers, identified a clear link with positive student

outcomes showing that these improved when leadership sources were distributed throughout the school community (Silns and Mulford, 2002). Whilst there appear to be few studies that show such a clear positive link between such an approach to leadership and outcomes, it is noted here that a crucial factor was the fact that teachers felt empowered to lead in areas they were interested in.

This suggests that not only is it important to provide opportunities for people within organisations to take a lead role, it is crucial they are comfortable with this, having some control over their sphere of influence. Distributing the ability for others to lead therefore requires shared ownership of power and control, which for those who are more used to a hierarchical model, might find difficult. Distributed leadership has been likened to group-work theory which might sit comfortably with many staff within human services, who may have some expertise in this area, eg social workers, community workers. Equally, a collective notion of shared power might sit more comfortably with the values of staff within these organisations (Lawler, 2005). For many however, the safety of a hierarchical structure which defines the parameters of control and provides a structured environment within which to work may be hard to relinquish.

The three top qualities of effective leaders have been identified as, 'the ability to empower others' followed closely by 'a genuine concern' and 'being inspirational communicators' (CIPD, 2008). Empowerment requires sharing power and an ability to let go, as well as followers who are willing to take up the mantle and run with it. This appears to be what occurred within the US elementary schools in Silns and Mulford's (2002) research with such positive outcomes.

Distributed leadership has been likened to collaborative leadership and across Scottish social services this is described by Patterson (2010) as being desirable due to the complexity and uncertainty of problems which, rather than draw solely on individual knowledge, require people to work together to find solutions. This 'team-work' suggests the whole team working as equals, taking on a leadership role together. It infers a non-hierarchical approach. In current, often described as overly bureaucratic, risk-averse workplaces across human services, this may be a challenge.

2.4.2 Challenges to distributed leadership

Opponents of distributed leadership models argue that because, as a concept, it is so poorly defined, it is hard to determine its usefulness. With no consensus it is not entirely clear what is being distributed, by whom and whether it is actively being distributed or merely taken (Currie and Lockett, 2011). Gronn (2008) argues that distributed leadership should not be seen as enforced but rather should be allowed to emerge through spontaneous collaborations. He further supports the notion that whilst spontaneous emergence promotes motivation and enthusiasm in staff to lead, there is also a place for coaching. This could be undertaken by experienced individual leaders or more collectively through team or project meetings. These ideas also support collective influence both by followers and leaders – coaching can be a two way process.

Although the effectiveness of distributed leadership may not be clear, it is supported by the UK government who have been described as seeing it as a panacea for supporting the need to solve 'wicked' problems, particularly across the sphere of health and social care. Pooling knowledge and expertise as a resource is seen as cost effective (Deloitte, 2010).

2.4.3 Distributed leadership or professionalism in practice?

Distributed leadership across organisations therefore appears to require cultures that support sharing of expertise at all levels. This requires a level of confidence by staff to feel able to share their knowledge and skills with others across a range of contexts (Spillane and Camburn, 2006). It further implies environments that support collaborative practice and skills inherent in staff to operate within such complex situations. Finally, the literature suggests individuals and groups require opportunities to lead where they can truly influence, with real power to effect change (Silns and Mulford, 2002).

Historically, as professions have evolved to meet global and technological changes, organisations have similarly had to change in order to find new solutions to increasingly complex problems and to meet increased expectations. The notion that one 'expert' has the answer is no longer viable. Knowledge transfer, inter-professional collaboration and greater recognition of shared ownership of problems seem set to drive organisational development in the future. I argue that being a professional requires leadership qualities, both in relation to an individual's own work, as well as collectively, in relation to the enhancement of their own, and others, professional contexts. I suggest that professionals need a deep sense of their own professional identity to have the confidence to lead as accountable, autonomous professionals both within their own discipline and across disciplinary boundaries. I further suggest that, within the current climate of scarce resources and complex work environments, there is a need to discover innovative yet cost effective ways of developing professionals as leaders across human services. If professionalism were re-conceptualised to incorporate key elements of leadership, this may open up new ways to approach

leadership development across organisations. For example, if professional identity can be strengthened through the provision of greater opportunities for professionals to take on (distributed) leadership roles throughout their career, there may be less of a requirement for more formal leadership programmes. Such programmes have provided patchy outcomes in relation to building leadership capacity, shown to be costly and are unable to accommodate large numbers due largely to their lack of focus on distributed models (Brundrett, 2006; Scottish Government, 2008).

2.4.4 Distributed leadership or innovation?

New thinking about organisational development certainly suggests more innovative approaches are required in the future to bring about effective outcomes. Bason (2010:245), suggests that ' Like a gardener who tends to living organisms in his garden, so must the top executive nurture the organisation's innovation ecosystem,'

Borins (2002) goes further by arguing, '...the choice faced by managers is innovate or die.'

Kao (1991) notes that fostering creativity within organisations can appear counterintuitive for managers as it challenges many established corporate cultures. He suggests that to achieve it, organisational control systems, such as the culture, norms, policies, programmes and reward systems, have to be relaxed enough to allow creativity to germinate and grow. Such relaxed cultures could support distributed leadership models.

A fear of anarchy reigning has prevented some organisations embracing this advice yet those who are successful have managed to balance increased productivity with innovative change. Two authors have a

warning for those who are unable or unwilling to work within this creative space.

'The paradox of positive turbulence is one business leaders today cannot afford to ignore. The energising, disparate, invigorating, unpredictable force that often feels like chaos is the same creative energy that can provide continuous success and organisational renewal. Without such risk-taking, without embracing uncertainty, many of today's leading businesses will be tomorrow's failures' (Gryskiewicz and Epstein, 2000:63).

Challenges then, within the literature, call for public sector managers to create a strategic, creative space that allows for the adoption of innovative approaches and practices, shape strong collaboration with internal and external partners, and contribute to and empower their staffs' innovation capacity (Behn 1995 in Bason 2010:249). Borins (2002) has argued that whilst previously 'public sector innovation' was seen as an oxymoron, more recent academic interest in public management innovation has begun to change this perception. Again, setting a scene where distributed models of leadership could flourish.

Sennett (2008) drew a parallel with charismatic leaders and some craftspeople who work in isolation, suggesting that if neither share their craft, although they may leave some legacy through their created artifacts, their skill will eventually die out. He suggests that 'social experts' or craftspeople who work collaboratively with others are those that are prepared to share their expertise, thus allowing creativity to flourish. This analogy is helpful when thinking about organisational legacy, because if organisations are to flourish, then leadership cannot

reside within individual people but requires to be embedded throughout the organisation.

2.5 Summary

The literature identified little evidence of explicit links between leadership and professionalism. However, when exploring both underlying concepts, it became apparent there appear to be implicit links particularly noticeable through the language, used to describe each concept. At times I was confused which body of knowledge I was reading about due to profound similarities in language as well as issues being attributed to one or other concept. For example, Hamel (2009) described creative 'community approaches' when discussing leadership, whereas Monreaux et al (2011), in their research on professionalism, talk about interpersonal and complex environments where 'professionals work collectively'.

The development of professional identity is a complex process which cannot be attributable solely to either opportunities given or opportunities taken to lead within organisations. However, the literature on effective distributed models of leadership appears to locate these within empowering organisations that provide staff with creative spaces to innovate, collaborate and make mistakes. Such supportive cultures within organisations have been shown to raise morale and confidence levels.

My own view, drawn from observation and experience, is that opportunities to lead, whether formal, informal, positional or ad hoc, have had an impact on the development of my own professional identity. These opportunities have not only helped to shape it, they have strengthened it. Equally, from my own experience I would suggest that,

having a strong sense of professional identity has provided me with confidence. I consider myself a confident professional with a strong sense of individual professional identity as well as being confident about the profession to which I belong. Having opportunities throughout my career to lead, be creative, chart new waters, innovate and make mistakes have all led me to this place.

The literature suggests current leadership thinkers are moving towards greater collaborative models within organisations that harness the knowledge and expertise of all staff. It also points to areas, including human services within the UK, where this might be difficult to achieve, certainly in the short term. The literature supports mechanisms, particularly within today's turbulent times, which encourage self-reflection, emotional intelligence and continuous feedback both in relation to leadership and professionalism. For example, the 'Leadership at All Levels' report, (Deloitte 2010:9), identifies emotional intelligence as a key requisite for effective leadership which they describe as, '..personal insight and an awareness of their own strengths, blind spots, possible pitfalls and untapped resources and potential'. Using 'self' is suggested as a way of gaining trust, with and respect from, followers which ultimately gains 'buy in'. Such attributes have variously been described in the literature as emanating from theories of reflective and reflexive practice, (Schon, 1983; Schon, 1987) as well as emotional intelligence (Boyatzis and Saatcioglu, 2008; Goleman, 1996). Such enabling environments provide people with opportunities to think, develop and gain confidence which will support them as more effective leaders as well as professionals.

Chapter 3 – **My Research Stance**

Within the review of associated literature there have been a range of approaches and methodologies presented. For example, research by Wilson and Cox (2010) adopted a qualitative grounded approach where they interviewed 262 across six private sector organisations. Although still within the 'family' of qualitative research, this specific project focussed heavily on the leader as an individual whilst omitting to recognise for example, the influence of context and leader/follower relationships as a dynamic process. It was also located within a private sector context. This contrasts with my own research which is located within a human service context, largely within the public sector and draws on a number of inter-connecting concepts that result in a social constructionist subjective stance which has been discussed earlier. Additionally, Bennis (2000) adopted quantitative methods within a mixed methods approach within a study of 350 private sector multi-national companies involved in management development. Through the use of questionnaires and some focus groups, they felt in a position to identify a list of key leadership traits, common to all leaders. This approach again contrasts with my own research paradigm.

The theoretical framework therefore that underpins this study draws on the following key concepts,

- Constructivism and Social constructionism - drawing on the interplay between a psychological perspective on the nature of learning and a sociological perspective of the reality of the world.
- Different ways of knowing – drawing on multiple realities and 'ways of knowing' (Heron and Reason, 1997) and Gardner's 'multiple intelligences' (1999).

- Identity theory – drawing on social psychology and linking to Bourdieu's 'dispositions'.

These theories underpin the approach I have taken to the research study as a whole. They highlight my own beliefs and values which recognise the unique and diverse way individuals' might develop identities whilst being influenced by different understandings of a socially constructed world.

3.1 Constructivist and Social Constructionist Theory

The terms constructionist and social constructionist tend to be used interchangeably with the more generic constructionist term being used for both (Charmaz, 2000;2006). Both terms refer to how individuals' or society constructs the world around them, dependent on their experience, cognitive understanding and interpretation. It recognises there is not one, but multiple, changing realities (Baxter-Mogolda, 2004).

Constructivism, drawn from social and developmental psychology, focuses on building knowledge and was initially introduced to understand the developmental stages of children (Piaget, 1954).

> `*We understand "constructionism" as including, but going beyond, what Piaget would call "constructivism." The word with the v expresses the theory that knowledge is built by the learner, not supplied by the teacher. The word with the n expresses the further idea that this happens especially felicitously when the learner is engaged in the construction of something external or at least shareable ... a sand castle, a machine, a computer program, a book. This leads us to a model using a cycle of internalization of what is outside, then externalization of what is inside and so on'*
>
> (Papert, 1993:3)

Within this study participants have been invited to draw on their individual understandings of the topic based on their unique world view through storytelling – a constructivist approach and by collating these stories, I have begun to 'construct' a new way of knowing based on collective views - constructionist. My own interpretation of the themes, and the way I have constructed the outcome, will be highly influenced by my own constructs.

Proponents of a constructionist or constructivist approach share the goal of understanding the world of lived experience from the perspective of those who live within it, and are influenced by the post-modernist movement. However, it has been suggested that interpretivists, unlike constructivists, seek to adopt a logical empiricist methodology to human enquiry (Schwandt, 2003). A main criticism levelled at constructivism suggest it challenges biomedical realities for example, and questions self evident and seemingly stable realities (Andrews, 2012). However, such critics have been accused of providing little evidence to substantiate their claims although criticism of social constructionism, in relation to not recognising an objective reality continues to be widespread (Bury, 1986; Craib, 1997; Schwandt, 2003).

An interesting point made by Lee (2012) is that whilst constructivism and constructionism are broadly and very generally defined as being driven by 'individual' or 'social' forces respectively, constructionism consists of more nuanced subsets. There are, for example, social and psychological forms of constructionism and within social constructionism, weaker and stronger versions, depending on the stance they take on 'the role that social factors play in what constitutes legitimate knowledge' (Schwandt, 2003 p308). Both share the assumptions that knowledge is not disinterested or apolitical but the degree to which other factors play a part is contested.

Lee (2012) argues that Lincoln and Denzin, strong proponents, alongside Guba, of qualitative research paradigms, support 'strong social constructionism' (SSC), which favours a more radically sceptical and nihilistic stance to interpretations. Lee also points out, and to confuse matters more in my view, that unlike the more generally accepted definition, Lincoln, Guba and Denzin use the term 'constructivism' when describing what others often define as 'constructionism'.

> '*The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjective epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures.*'
>
> (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p24)

Lee (2012) questions Denzin and Lincoln's definition of 'multiple realities', seeking greater clarity. He suggests it could mean either that the world is one reality and individuals, through their interaction with one another, create and co-create different perspectives of the same one reality. Or, there really are many different realities and nothing is fixed. In Lee's analysis, Lincoln, Guba and Denzin all support the latter which he describes as strong social constructionism (SSC) (or constructivism as defined by Lincoln, Guba and Denzin) (Guba and Lincoln 2005; Denzin and Lincoln 2005).

My own view is that there are different realities, constructed cognitively as well as through feelings, experiences and other ways of understanding our surroundings which make up our individual knowledge of the world. These can change over time, through interaction with others and based on new knowledge acquisition and experience. Yet I believe there is a tangible world and it is our individual ontological and epistemological perspectives that differ. I am persuaded by an example provided by Lee (2012), which suggests that I might categorise a person as female due to

how they present themselves (long hair; earrings), yet a friend might categorise them as male due to other, in their eyes more dominant characteristics (stocky build; overalls). Despite our interpretations, the reality – that the person is real and a defined gender – remains the same. This is of course a rather black and white example, although as an aside the German government has just passed a law becoming the first country to recognise a 'third sex' option for babies of indeterminate gender (The Independent Nov 1st 2013). However, the world is not black and white but a far more complex place where daily we are not just required to have a view on one of two (or three) realities. I believe we interpret 'a' reality from different perspectives and the creativity of human existence, is how we co-create new realities from our interactions with one another.

Whilst Piaget (1954) emphasised a psychological approach to learning, Vygotsky (1934; 1978) introduced social environment as being of greater importance. Socio constructivism emphasises the impact of collaboration or shared learning to knowledge creation. Whilst recognising the importance of both, as I have outlined above, I am strongly drawn to a more collaborative approach, seeing the interconnectedness of human endeavour and understanding.

Distributed cognition views cognition as fundamentally 'shared' or 'distributed' between individuals. Defenders of this approach question the very discrimination between what is social and what is individual, "research paradigms built on supposedly clear distinctions between what is social and what is cognitive will have an inherent weakness, because the causality of social and cognitive processes is, at the very least, circular and is perhaps even more complex" (Perret-Clermont et al 1991:50).

Within this study I work from a constructivist/socio constructivist position, understanding there are unique individual, as well as collective realities within participants' stories. I understand knowledge to be created internally as well as being influenced by external environments and people. I recognise that reality can be strongly or weakly influenced by social and individual perspectives. Through drawing on these multiple, complex realities, the outcomes from this study, have collectively created new knowledge.

3.2 Different ways of knowing

Aligned with theories about the way that people understand and interpret realities are theories about different forms of knowledge and how these are conceptualised. My ontological stance is to value a wide range of 'ways of knowing' which has been informed particularly by the work of Heron and Reason (1997) and Gardner (1999). I include these theories to provide a limited underpinning to the diversity of knowing imperative to social research. If cognitive knowing alone were valued more highly than other forms of knowing, social research, in its many diverse forms, could not have evolved to include the richness it enjoys today.

3.2.1 Multiple Intelligences

Heron talks of four distinct 'ways of knowing'; Experiential, Presentational, Propositional, and Practical (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). And according to Gardner, there are seven distinct yet interacting intelligences that can be linked to their own neurological substrate: linguistic intelligence (sensitivity to the spoken and written word and the ability to master languages), logical-mathematical intelligence (the capacity to analyze problems logically and scientifically), musical intelligence (skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of

music), bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (as exemplified by dancers, surgeons, and artists), spatial intelligence (characteristic of pilots, graphic artists, and architects), interpersonal intelligence (a talent for understanding and relating to other people) and intrapersonal intelligence (the capacity for understanding oneself). Gardner (1999) provides a paradigm shift with his work being particularly influential in educational circles for its recognition that 'one size does not fit all' and that individualised learning should be the norm. All intelligences are required for health and wellbeing of individuals and groups with no emphasis on one over the other. Criticism from Gardner himself of this categorisation approach emphasises there are more intelligences than have been categorised and categories are based on criteria. Who sets the criteria is a key question and what is classed as 'an intelligence?'

It has been suggested,

> *'a human intellectual competence must entail a set of skills of problem solving – enabling the individual to resolve genuine problems or difficulties that he encounters and, when appropriate, to create an effective product – and must also entail the potential for finding or creating problems – thereby laying the groundwork for the acquisition of new knowledge.'*
>
> (Gardner 1983:65)

Gardner further recognises that what is classed as an important 'intelligence' may differ based on culture, politics as well as place in time. Fundamentally though, Gardner's work has influenced thinking, not only about how people think but also about how new knowledge is created both individually and collectively (Gardner, 1995).

By recognising multiple ways of knowing and the concept that participants' might be 'intelligent' in different ways, I have deepened the richness of the study. This focussed attention on the participant perspective, valuing what and how they chose to offer their information. The common denominator was the topic of the inquiry where I used

trigger questions to ensure key areas were covered within a narrative approach.

3.2.2 Emotional Intelligence

A related intelligence proposed by Boyatzis et al (2002) is emotional intelligence (EI) described as, 'self management or intrapersonal abilities such as adaptability and relationship management or interpersonal abilities such as networking.' The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) which was brought to popular prominence in the 1990s by Goleman (1996) is contested in respect of terminology and how it becomes operationalised and embedded. There are currently three models, Ability model, Mixed Model and Trait Model. The ability model recognises the abilities of individuals to perceive, use, understand and manage emotions. The mixed model, first introduced by Goleman outlines five EI constructs, self-awareness; self-regulation; social skill; empathy and motivation. The trait model or 'trait self-efficacy', based on the work of Petrides (2001), focuses on the self perceptions of emotional abilities.

Strong criticism for all models of EI comes from many quarters. For example, that is should not be classed as an intelligence as it does not fit any such category and, '...the whole theory is built on quicksand: there is no sound scientific evidence' (Eynsenck 2000). Locke (2005) suggests it should be re-categorised into a 'skill' rather than an 'intelligence'. Landy (2005) argues that it has little predictive value and only exists as a concept.

Nevertheless EI has gained, rather than diminished, in popularity. My axiological approach supports the concept of EI as a mechanism to centre stage emotional issues as they impact on and with participants within this

study. Through the narrative process of mirroring, reflecting and paraphrasing, sometimes for the first time, people begin to understand not only what they think, but also what they feel (Etherington, 2004).

Howe (2008) expands on what he describes as two kinds of minds; one that thinks (cognitive) and one that feels (emotional). I find this rather simplistic definition of EI helpful. Whilst recognising that the reality is far more complicated, this conceptualisation allows not only EI to have recognition, but also to sit alongside the more dominant cognitive intelligence as a perceived equal. My own experience would suggest that life is not just theoretical but experienced at many levels; I do not just read books, I 'feel' the characters; I do not just learn to dance but I engage with the emotions. In the past, behavioural and cognitive psychology has sought to airbrush emotions out, somehow believing that for our actions to be rational, we must overcome emotions, using the power of logic and reason. Emotions through the centuries have been variously described as 'base', 'primitive' and 'disruptive' (Howe, 2008:3). However, strong voices have always argued that humans need to engage with their own and others' emotions, whether happy, sad, tragic or melancholy to truly experience life. Underpinning this study therefore is a recognition and understanding of multiple ways of knowing which support diverse perspectives and value multiple intelligences.

Whilst recognising and valuing the importance, as well as the limitations, of EI as a 'way of knowing', I have similarly valued the work of Heron and Reason as outlined above (1997). This 'extended epistemology', reaches beyond the primarily theoretical knowledge of academia as these ways of knowing value peoples' experience, creativity, skill as well as their ability to cognitively understand and express concepts and ideas. Heron argued that when this was in place there was the possibility of achieving a more

holistic view of a situation or problem. Much research outside of a social, qualitative domain focuses on the rational mind and values the intellectual ability to hypothesise, gather, analyse and generalise information. Other ways of knowing are frequently marginalised or indeed unacknowledged. By drawing on these theories I ensured participants within this study had an opportunity to draw on 'experiential', 'presentational', 'propositional' and 'practical' knowing from their lived experience (Heron and Reason 1997).

3.3 Identity theory

Additional theories I have included within my theoretical framework to underpin this study include Social Identity theory (SIT) and Identity theory (IT). These theories help to explain how and why people might develop a sense of identity which is an area of exploration within this study.

Whilst some writers suggest there is clear blue water between the SIT and IT, others suggest greater similarities (Deaux, 1992; Stets and Burke, 2000). SIT has an emphasis on groups within society, how people operate within them; how people align to them and how this impacts on the individual, as well as the collective. People can feel part of an 'in' group and then by definition, there is an 'out' group to which they do not belong and to which social comparisons are made. On the other hand, identity theorists (IT) suggest that, through a reflexive process individuals form their own identities irrespective of the group. However, no individual is an island. They co-exist with other individuals within groups, communities and societies. So whilst individuals can and do develop their own sense of identity, this is shaped by the context within which they are born, their life experiences and others with whom they have contact.

People generally therefore have both a social identity, by being part of and a 'sense of being the same as' a group (or many groups), as well as a role identity where they may have a sense of being different. I identify, for example, in the role of mother but I wouldn't necessarily consider myself the same as all mothers – although there might be some similarities. I also have a social identity as a social worker, belonging to the social work profession. This sense of professional identity does not mean I am identical to all other social workers, far from it, but it does give me a sense of cohesion, oneness and being part of my 'in' group. The strength of feeling this can give helps begin to provide an understanding of some of the difficulties of achieving positive inter-professional collaborative practice, as by definition, other disciplines are not in the same 'in' group. Social identity theory has shown that people within the 'in' group can evaluate their group as 'good' and 'out' groups as bad (Stets and Burke, 2000).The above example of a SIT position, whilst not suggesting other disciplines are 'bad', does suggest that those within the 'in', professional group for example, are more likely to understand one another, the issues at stake and the context within which the work takes place. These social factors are strong drivers to unite. This theory provides some understanding about how and why professionals develop a sense of professional identity.

Chapter 4 – Research Methodology and Assumptions

4.1 Social Science perspective

This qualitative research study is located within a social constructionist subjective stance and I approach it from a social science perspective. Social science is frequently used as an umbrella term to describe non-traditional scientific disciplines such as sociology, psychology and anthropology and increasingly it is broadened to include humanities subjects such as history. Collectively it encompasses a range of disciplines which can broadly be described as being concerned with human behaviour from multiple perspectives. Human behaviour is, in part, determined by how individuals and groups interpret their world; how they conceptualise ideas, models and practices. Within this broader definition of social science, I am using an interpretivist social science approach, using social critique and interpretation to shine a light, within this particular sphere and from the perspectives of a defined group, on the social construction of reality. Within this study I am concerned with how individuals from different disciplines interpret the concepts of leadership and professionalism from their lived experience.

Central to this approach is a social constructivist approach which has been adopted by other authors exploring similar themes grounded in interpretivist and constructionist epistemology and ontology (Grint 2005; Sinclair 2007; Cunliff 2008). This approach argues that the social world is humanly produced in ongoing activity and routines (externalisation). We are socialised in the world as we interpret meanings and take on different identities (internalisation). For the researcher this approach has to ensure that assumptions regarding the nature and process of socially constructing reality and how these assumptions impact on constructions

of knowledge have been addressed. For this study, I recognised the importance of valuing different ways of knowing as discussed in chapter 3, seeking to provide opportunities for participants to share their stories, drawing on multiple ways of knowing. A criticism of this approach however is that whilst a narrative approach does provide some scope for participants to share experience, practice wisdom and reflections, it has its limitations. Whilst the use of words is a powerful medium, Atkinson and Delamont (2005), caution against reliance on this alone to interpret the social world. They suggest that the social world is not just about experience but more nuanced and complex than this. They suggest that research looks to other mediums to convey meaning making such as drama, pictures and dance. Whilst only focusing on discourse, my research could be criticised for being reductionist, and not recognising multiple alternative ways available to access information.

Grint (2005) suggests that ideas still abound within leadership narratives that suggest there are correct responses that leaders should adopt to match specific situational imperatives. He contests this, referring to notions of context, environment and historical understanding of any situation being understood and conceptualised by individuals and groups variously. A social constructionist approach acknowledges that individuals and societies construct the world around them, dependent on their experience, cognitive understanding and interpretation. It recognises there is not one, but multiple, changing realities (Baxter-Mogolda 2004). Please see chapter 4 for a more in depth discussion about social constructionism.

Social constructionism is not new, having been described as having its roots in Kuhn's work (1962) with a, Social Construction of Reality' (Berger and Luckmann 1966) being considered as seminal. Through the use of

language in its many forms including written, verbal, non verbal and symbolic, individuals and groups construct and co-constructs different interpretations of the world. These lived worlds or experiences are highly subjective and are shown to be temporary and changeable (Grint 2005).

Increasingly some writers have turned their attention to and adopted a social constructionist research perspective within studies about leadership (Collinson 2005; Ford 2006). Pye (2005) reframes the term leadership, using 'sensemaking' in an attempt to challenge widely held assumptions about the term. She seeks to redefine conceptualisations of leadership, suggesting that whilst so much attention has been given to understanding leadership, there is still little shared understanding and that it still remains 'problematic' (Bernard 1948). Whilst recognising there will always be different constructs, Pye (2005) seeks to 'reconceptualise' leadership as more akin to 'organisation' in an attempt to challenge many hard held assumptions of leadership as heroic, hierarchical, masculine and fixed. Berger and Luckmann (1966:137) remind us that despite attempts at redefinition or new conceptualisations, '..there will always be a social-structural base for competition between rival definitions of reality and the outcome of the rivalry will be effected if not always determined outright, by the development of this base.' They further illuminate their point by stating, a definition of reality ...is, 'demonstrated to be pragmatically superior not by virtue of its intrinsic qualities, but by its applicability to the social interests of the group that has become its "carrier"' (p38).

Ford (2006) takes a social constructionist approach when exploring leadership as a discursive phenomenon. An element of this study identifies how discourses of leadership become part of managerial workplace identities and discusses what other discourses help to shape managers' identities. She shines a feminist poststructural lens on her

research, recognising much previous research about leadership has privileged male discourses (Acker 1990; Martin 1990, 1994; Calas and Smircich 1996). Feminist poststructural approaches she suggests, 'have been influential in accentuating the significance of the multiple, contradictory and fragmented nature of subjectivity and the kaleidoscopic strands of identity open to individuals' (Ford 2006:82). It is clear therefore that from a social constructionist perspective identities, realities and meaning are not only subjective but also complex, multifaceted and inextricably interwoven with for example, context, history, politics, gender, culture and values. Our identities as well as our epistemological and ontological perspectives shape our world as well as our world shaping our identities.

It follows therefore that the method I used to collect data adopted a narrative approach as narrative is not independent of cultural conventions and shared formats. Experiences, memories, emotions and other apparently personal and private states are constructed and enacted through culturally shared narrative types and genres (Holstein 2000). Locating my study within human services, I was able to draw on discourses about and from within this context, whilst recognising the subjectivity of individual contributions. Equally, individual identities, whether personal or professional, are influences not only through a workplace context, but also from wider societal and personal influences and experiences.

By specifically drawing on a human service context however, I was able to analyse the narratives within this study so as to treat them as instances in social action, that is, as speech acts or events with some common properties, cultural conventions and recognisable issues (Atkinson and Delamont 2005). Using a constellation approach (see chapter 4) to

identify themes, enabled an approach that could capture cultural similarities as well as divergence. Atkinson and Delamont (2005:836 argue that 'narrative is not a paradigm in itself but rather, analytic strategies that reflect and respect the intrinsic complexity of social organisations, forms of social action and the conventions of social representation'

My view of intersubjective social reality forming chimes with other researchers who suggest there is no 'I' without 'you' (Shotter 1989) as we are always in relation with others whether present or not. Dialogue does not have to be spoken out loud, as human beings we are continually making sense and meaning through observation and within our heads (Cunliffe et al 2004). Such reflexivity is vital for progression towards new ways of thinking and knowing with the focus not being on what the social reality is but how it is continually being shaped in responsive dialogue. Many researchers suggest power permeates all social relationships (Deetz 1992; Philips and Hardy 1997) and some specifically focus on power differentials such as gender imbalance (Ford 2005). Undoubtedly, the analysis of discourses can unearth profound power differentials based on many criteria such as who has a voice, which voices are privileged and what common beliefs are held without questioning.

I have approached the analysis of the discourses within this study, based on my belief that reality is subjective, co-constructed and constantly changing. Bakhtin suggests 'an utterance is never just an expression of something already existing outside it that is given and final. It always creates something that never existed before, something absolutely new and unrepeatable' (1996:119-20). The themes that have emerged from participant discourses within this study have created something new, which, in turn will be understood variously by others and new realities will

emerge. This is the relational nature of intersubjectivity and of dialogue, not purely reflective but also intuitive and in many ways, taken for granted – a complex process (Cunliffe 2008).

4.2 Qualitative research in this study

From a new paradigm perspective, I am using qualitative research described as a 'family of approaches' which at times argues within the family about boundaries, limitations and scope as a set of approaches but that nevertheless pulls together in the face of outside criticism (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). New paradigm research supports the notion that research can never be neutral, that it will have consequences as it is constantly questioning realities. These may be intended or unintended consequences, both of which will illuminate current realities and provide new, emerging perspectives on the world. It respects and celebrates the intense particularity of individual situations, recognising tacit understanding, contradictions and ambiguities which are invaluable to gaining insight. Whilst valuing individual contribution, it seeks to understand the depth of human thought, experience and interaction, often within a lived environment. Methods used to gain this type of information through data collection and ways used to analyse the data will therefore be very different to those used in more positivist approaches. Within the former it is more common, although not exclusively so, for researchers to adopt a qualitative approach using such methods as story telling with fewer participants to gain an understanding of the richness of their experiences, whereas the use of questionnaires with larger numbers might be more commonplace with the latter form of research.

The use of smaller numbers or the lack of large data sets continues to be a criticism levelled at new paradigm researchers, suggesting a disinterest

in and inability to generalise. New paradigm research is interested in generalisation, however not in order to make deterministic predictions, but as general statements of power, possibilities and emergent thinking. This type of research can describe general patterns and it acknowledges that often, 'the most personal and particular, is also, the most general' (Reason, 1997). I argue within this study that the individual participant' stories, not only offer unique perspectives on the subjects being studied, but also collectively these voices provide new insights.

Qualitative research is different from many other forms of 'objective' research, particularly that within a positivist paradigm. Criticism is levelled about new paradigm research in relation to perceived lack of objectivity and rigour; for being too self indulgent; for not making a difference and as has been identified, as having no capacity to generalise findings. In essence it is criticised for being too subjective (Ballinger, 2006). I would challenge this on a range of levels and discuss this in more detail later in this chapter. However, at this stage, I would concur with Lincoln and Guba's view that some of the questions levelled at new paradigm research (as opposed to a positivist approach) can be like, 'Catholic questions directed at a Methodist audience' or 'Hindu questions to a Muslim audience'. These analogies show that, because the world views of each of these religions are based on such radically different premises, it does not make sense to try and understand or judge one from the perspective of the other (Guba and Lincoln, 2005).

New paradigm research can be strongly participative and political (Freire, 1996; Heron and Reason, 1997; Whitehead and McNiff, 2006). Although I have placed my study within this paradigm I recognise my research has a limited participatory element.

4.3 Sample Selection

I interviewed twelve participants, two from each of the disciplines of social work, nursing, teacher education, community learning and development, police and educational psychology. I identified the first six participants through personal connections, either I knew them personally or I asked a colleague to recommend a contact within their particular profession. None of the participants work directly with me. I identified the second six participants through asking the initial six to recommend a colleague who was unknown to me. This use of purposive sampling ensured the likelihood that the range of disciplines was represented within the overall sample (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

The criteria for selection of the data sample required participants to be at least 10 years post qualification and to have worked in at least two different settings/organisations. My reasoning for this was to enable them to have enough experience to be in a position to assess their journey towards becoming a professional and have had a range of options to seek or be provided with opportunities to lead.

Initial thinking had led me to suggest participants be at least 20 years post qualification which is recorded in my original ethics approval documentation. On reflection and in consultation with my supervisors, I opted to require participants to be at least 10 years qualified as this would allow a greater diversity of age and experience. Had I used the initial criteria, my sample would not have included younger, less experienced professionals. Whilst not seeking to include total novice professionals on this occasion, this criteria provided a sample that included people who just had 10 years experience as well as those with 20 and over 30. In consultation with my supervisors, as neither the

ethics or focus of the study would be compromised, I did not seek further ethical approval for this change.

If one of the first six participants was female, I requested their colleague to be included in the second set of six be male. This provided a gender balance across the whole sample. I drew participants from a range of geographical areas covering both rural and urban areas in Scotland (Appendix 2). A discussion of why gender was not featured within the final analysis of this study can be found in the final reflections within Chapter 6.

4.4 Data Collection

I collected my data over a six month period. I recorded when I had made initial contact, how this was achieved (e-mail; in person; phone contact), whether the participant agreed to be involved and if they had to reschedule or cancel our arrangement. I compiled a spreadsheet to track ongoing activity (Appendix 1). During the course of the study I contacted a total of 19 potential participants, 12 of whom agreed to participate. I had to wait until each contacted person had responded before I contacted the next person as my sample was so small and discipline specific, I did not want to involve a participant and not be in a position to use their story.

I sent each contacted participant an initial e-mail outlining the study with the participants' guidance material. I explained the process and assured them they were under no obligation to agree to participate and could withdraw at any stage. Engagement with participants within the research process involves power where the researcher has to constantly scrutinise and interrogate their own position (Etherington, 2004). Recognising

power relationships within the research process enabled me to feel 'anxiety', about how well I was engaging with participants because, 'we must at least be as aware as possible of what we are doing' (Josselson, 1996:70). To this end I was aware that the tone of my correspondence should be friendly yet formal enough for people to 'opt out' should they wish with no sense of guilt.

I arranged to meet with each participant to record their story and gave them an opportunity to complete the consent form prior to or at this initial meeting. These meetings lasted between 45 minutes – one hour 23 minutes. The consent form covered recording of the meetings which everyone within the sample agreed. All meetings were recorded and the recordings were transcribed and uploaded initially onto my laptop. Should a participant have refused to be recorded I would, with their agreement, have taken notes of the meeting. I felt it was important within this research study to create as much trust as possible between myself and participants to enable a relationship to build which might enable people to relax and tell their story. I also recognise that social scientists do not have an inalienable right to conduct research involving others and I was privileged to gain the trust of these participants (Oaks, 2002).

I re-listened to the recordings following initial transcription to check for accuracy and amend. Transcriptions were sent to participants for approval and any required/desired changes. Following return these were marked 'Final' and uploaded for data analysis into Nvivo9. All stages of the process were recorded on the spreadsheet to enable a tracking to take place (Appendix 1). This was invaluable due to working full time over this period.

Meetings with participants took place at a venue of their choice which I cautioned should be a safe, quiet, relaxed environment. Venues included my front room, a hotel restaurant, several offices, including mine, a psychiatric unit and an arts centre. Please see Appendix 2 for pen pictures of participants.

4.5 Data Storage and Management

The spreadsheet I created to track the processes involved in data collection was updated regularly. The organisation of data, according to Creswell (2007), is the first stage in a data analysis spiral where the researcher moves in analytical cycles, rather than using a fixed linear approach to move from raw data to final account. This initial 'ordering' of information helped provide a framework on which to build other recording tools throughout the study which included reflective diaries; supervision notes; notebooks of useful quotes and the use of Nvivo9.
I used the spreadsheet to update when I had initially contacted, arranged to meet and then met with participants. I noted when I had gained consent to ensure this important task was completed with all participants and I kept hand written consent forms within a locked cabinet. Although the sample was small, it was important to keep accurate records as it was easy to lose track of information, particularly with competing work demands.

I used an iphone to record interviews, uploading this onto my laptop. From these recordings, I was able to transcribe participants' stories which were then stored as 'drafts' on my laptop. Both these devices are password protected. Once they had been verified and agreed/updated by participants they were uploaded as 'final' version documents into NVivo9. I used a coding system to identify each participant which enabled me to

attribute story contributions to particular individuals whilst protecting their privacy. Neuman (1997) describes coding as a means of systematically reorganising raw data into a format that is machine readable – in this case, easy to analyse using NVivo9.

4.6 Ethical Boundaries

I undertook this research within ethical boundaries where I continually sought to ensure I was treating people with respect and dignity throughout each process.

Initially I sought ethical approval from the University of Dundee Research Ethics Committee (UREC) (Appendix 3) which was granted on 22 November 2012 (Appendix 4).

Approval was granted in relation to the research design, trigger questions (Appendix 5) and related materials such as consent forms (Appendix 6) and participant information sheet (Appendix 7) used to gain the participation of my sample. This was important, as it provided independent scrutiny of the materials and approach I was proposing to use. Involving other people in research demands a high level of ethical awareness (McNiff and Whitehead, 2012). It ensured this approach was in line with agreed university procedures and national sector standards for ethical research. Not only is this important to ensure high standards of research are maintained, but it also minimises the risk of litigation due to improper research practices (Israel and Hay, 2006).

Initial approval is only one step in the process. It cannot ensure standards are upheld throughout the research study. This has to be undertaken by the researcher. Providing checks and balances throughout

the study was a mechanism by which I could monitor whether I was continuing to adopt an ethically sound approach. These checks and balances included for example, discussing stages of the research, including whether my behaviour was ethical with my supervisors on a regular basis; using discussions with a critical friend to question my ethical approach; keeping accurate, up to date records; upholding confidentiality, providing clear documentation and behaving in a respectful manner.

One example of an ethical discussion during supervision was when I questioned whether I should use discipline related coding (POL1 (police); SW2 (social work), being concerned this might breach confidentiality. Through discussion, I concluded this type of coding whilst adding depth to the study, could also provide privacy for participants as long as I ensured I anonymised the data collection spreadsheet within the appendix and edited out any identifying material within the text. This attention to detail provides evidence of respect for participants as valued partners within the research process.

Further examples of working within ethical boundaries are identified throughout this study.

4.7 Pilot Study

I undertook a small pilot of the semi structured interview on one participant who wasn't part of the final study. I used the trigger questions, prior to embarking on my study, to assess their viability and run through the whole process to seek enhancements. This is advised within any social research to not only test equipment, but also to uncover aspects of the research that need refinement (Neuman, 1997). This

proved invaluable as it transpired that many of the initial triggers interrupted the flow of the participant's story so I was able to adapt these. Reflecting on feedback from the participant in the pilot about how I had conducted the discussion allowed me to approach future meetings in a more relaxed manner, seeking to hear the voices of participants more fully. I interrupted less and realised I needed to approach the exercise in a listening, rather than talking mode. Whilst reflexivity can be interpreted in a variety of ways (Brewer, 2000), in this instance I believe, 'the researcher is part of the social world studied, and this calls for (continuous) exploration and self examination' (Alvesson, 2002:171).

Due to further feedback, I reorganised the trigger questions from the initial headings which included leadership; professional identity; professional development and organisational complexity to what the pilot participant described as more relevant ones. These included questions specifically about participant views on professionalism, leadership, connections between professionalism and leadership, professional identity and organisational complexity. The pilot taught me to listen carefully to the issues that are important to others, rather than being overly directive. Remembering people 'are active participants whose insights, feelings and co-operation are essential parts of the discussion process that reveals subjective meanings' was an invaluable lesson (Neuman, 1997:371). (Appendix 8)

Finally, the pilot illustrated that participants might be unaware of the concept of distributed leadership or 'leadership at all levels' within an organisation and may focus entirely on hierarchical leadership. This appeared to be the case within the pilot and whilst I wanted all participants to consider both aspects of leadership, I did not want 'leadership at all levels' to be omitted entirely. I decided to provide a

short definition to all participants prior to meetings, describing the concept of distributed leadership (Patterson, 2010; Deloitte, 2010) (Appendix 9). The purpose of this was to introduce a potentially new way of understanding leadership which might enable participants to think more broadly when assessing their own journeys to becoming a professional. My intention was that the trigger questions, asking whether they has been afforded or taken opportunities to lead throughout their career, might be influenced by this definition. I did consider a less directive approach, for example, not providing a definition at all. However, on reflection I decided, as the concepts of distributed leadership are relatively unknown, as born out from the pilot, a short definition would provide greater balance against the more dominant concept of hierarchical leadership. I recognise this will have shaped some of the discussions but it was my intention to do so as indicated above.

Whilst undertaking a pilot was helpful for me within the research process, I recognise tensions between my needs and those of the participant. She gave of her story but was not included within the final write up. Whilst this was made explicit from the outset, when undertaking the pilot, I became aware of the importance and impact of personal stories, not only to the participant but also to myself. Being in reflexive relationships creates a level of intimacy that might invite participants to reveal previously unarticulated, deeply personal stories (Etherington, 2004). Following the experience of the pilot, I shared my learning with the participant and sought their view on the experience. This allowed further insights and refining of materials. I transcribed the pilot participant's story although continued not to include them within the final submission. This was with participant's agreement and because I felt it was ultimately a very different conversation which did not have the benefit of the distributed leadership definition and was hampered by my inexperience. I

have since returned to the pilot participant and discussed her story again in light of my own enhanced experience which, with hindsight, had I thought about earlier, I might have been in a position to include her story in the final write up.

4.8 Narrative Inquiry and Storytelling

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argue, whilst narrative inquiry is useful and valid, there are issues to consider about its potential failures. One particular danger they describe as 'the Hollywood Plot' which suggests stories where the plot all works out well in the end. Described by Spence (1986) as 'narrative smoothing' it describes how researchers can focus on the story told rather than recognise the importance of stories not told. All stories are snapshots, remembrances and information chosen by the storytellers as acceptable to share. Kermode (1981) called untold stories 'narrative secrets' to which a careful reader will attend. To support such understanding, narrators are urged to provide readers with potential alternative interpretations of stories. In her autobiographical novel, Winterson (2012) invited readers to hear the silences in her own story, inviting them to co-construct her meaning related to their own experiences.

'When we tell a story, we exercise control, but in such a way as to leave a gap, an opening. It is a version, but never the final one. And perhaps we hope that the silences will be heard by someone else and the story can continue, can be retold' (Winterson, 2012:8).

Narrative inquiry takes a variety of forms and is rooted in different social and humanities disciplines (Daiute and Lightfoot, 2004). Within this study I have used it as a method of inquiry to enable information to be captured

from a range of individual sources. Using 'trigger' questions, I have guided participant's stories to enable the conversation to remain within the parameters of the research topic. Whilst attempting to provide opportunities for free flow storytelling, the restrictions of the topic did not allow for this to fully take place. However, I attempted to use as many open ended questions as possible to honour the story and allow the participant ownership (Cresswell, 2007). For example, the following questions illustrate the approach I adopted,

'Please start off by telling me about your journey to becoming a professional'
and,
'Please can you tell me about opportunities you might have had to lead, within your career'

Narrative research or inquiry has been described as, 'a field in the making' (Chase, 2005:651) due to its gaining popularity, being adopted across multiple disciplines and adapted in a wide range of ways. This makes it hard to define as it is dependent on the disciplinary approach, epistemological stance of the researcher and methods used for analysis. Narrative inquiry is a personal research method based on thinking narratively about human experience, 'as we tell our stories as inquirers, it is experience, not narrative, that is the driving impulse...narrative inquiry (is) a way to study experience...narrative is the closest we can come to experience' (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000:188).

Choosing a narrative approach in this study was an ethical decision. By this I mean it is an approach that sits well with my epistemological and axiological position of valuing people, genuinely seeking to hear their voice, as well as recognising the value of capturing different perspectives.

To this end I wanted a method that would enable difference to be honoured. Within many research paradigms, participants are often less used to being heard and may not feel empowered to tell their story (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). I felt it was important, even within such short periods of time, to engage with participants where we began a process of relationship building. For example, I always offered to reciprocate should there be anything I could offer participants in return for their time and their story. Two such instances entailed me identifying research articles for one participant who was undertaking a programme of study and acting as coach to another who was experiencing a work dilemma. During meetings I sought to encourage storytelling by listening attentively, using appropriate body language and providing positive feedback. The use of longer quotes in places demonstrates an attempt to hear individuals' 'whole story' rather than an interpretation of it which further supports an ethical approach.

Whilst some limitations have been identified, narrative approaches are gaining recognition with disciplines outside social science. Such limitations might be described by positivists as lacking in objectivity. Stories are essentially constructs of human experience, told after the event and can therefore be criticised as being fabricated rather than a reflection of (the storyteller's) reality. Stories do not reflect the world 'out there', but are constructed, rhetorical and interpretive (Riessman, 1993). Despite these issues, the positive elements of this research method, in my view, far outweigh any negatives deeming it appropriate to use within this study. These positive aspects include capturing the 'messiness, depth and texture of experienced life' (Etherington, 2004:213). Social research seeks to understand and storytelling allows peoples' lived experience as perceived by them to emerge. As discussed elsewhere, the

researcher's own interpretation of narratives is always part of the final equation.

Much narrative research is based on small numbers, using a range of methods to capture detailed information. My own study, whilst based on the collation of narrative data, is smaller, yet no less valid in nature, than some forms of narrative research which collate multiple stories over longer timescales. Due to the restrictions of this programme, participants have agreed to share a snapshot from own lived experiences to shine a light onto a small, yet significant area of their experience. It is these lights that make this study possible and it is these individual insights, musings, enlightenments that enrich this research. So whilst I make the distinction between other types of narrative enquiry, I do not lessen the impact and importance of these unique contributions.

Within narrative research, 'told stories' are 're-storied' by the researcher through the process of analysis (Creswell, 2007). This draws me to now discuss two distinct aspects of 're-storying'.

4.9 Researcher's Influence

From a qualitative research perspective, knowing cannot be isolated from a sense of self or from a sense of meaning or purpose. Whereas a more traditional, positivist approach demands criteria such as, controllability, replicability and observability to test validity of the theory (Cohen et al 2007).

Within this study I have chosen to include my own story not through the use of quotes but my ideas are woven throughout the pages. I become the thirteenth participant within the mix. Qualitative researchers who

interpret materials (stories; interviews; field notes; observations; photographs) to help make sense of the world have been described as 'quilt makers' using the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft (Guba and Lincoln, 2005). This making of a new object, a quilt, requires small pieces of material stitched together to make a new whole which has been likened to the fragments of information gathered from a range of sources within a qualitative research study which are then 'reformed'. This reforming is highly subjective and influenced by the assumptions, values, epistemological and ontological stance of the researcher (McNiff and Whitehead, 2012). The researcher's interpretations, even when balanced within a rigorous enquiry process, are still highly influential within 'restorying'. All writing is 'positioned' and within a stance (Creswell 2007).

By embedding my own 'story' within the write up through making explicit my assumptions and beliefs, I have made transparent my own voice grounded within my own experience. I did tell my story to another; I transcribed it and at one stage, including it within the data set, intending to draw on it for illustration. However, on reflection, I decided not to include my voice explicitly through the use of quotes as I felt it would render other voices less audible. Re-reading it alongside other stories, as part of the analysis however, afforded me an opportunity to be both reflective and reflexive. My final decision not to include quotes from my own story chimes with Etherington's view,'...although the content and process of the research might become seamlessly interwoven stories, effecting each other, it is important that the voices of researchers and researched are not merged and reported as one story...' (2004:83).

Others have attempted to represent multiple voices variously in final texts but with some criticism from participants (Lather and Smithies, 1997).

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:17) suggests that a 'crisis of representation' has arisen due to new paradigm research which acknowledges the life and presence of the researcher through reflexive processes. The crisis has been created in response to traditional notions of truth, knowledge and reality being stripped away as familiar structures for presenting findings. Creating a balance between the researcher and those researched is of paramount importance and a real tension within any study. I feel ultimately my opinions are strongly represented without overshadowing the stories of others although I will not be the ultimate judge of this.

Narrative research produces huge volumes of data and this study is no exception. All data, and in this case, stories, are precious, not simply to achieve an end goal, but because it contains information from individuals who have given their time to share their experience. It has to be honoured and handled with care as,

> *'through storying, people individually and collectively, derive meaning from their highly complex experiential situations'*
>
> *(Craig 2003)*

> *'Honouring individuality as well as capturing common themes is a craft requiring 'nonlinear decision making, common sense, research poetry and research colleagues'*
>
> (Daft 1983)

4.10 Story Constellations

Taking a malleable approach to analysing narrative research data, Craig (2007) suggests 'story constellations', not only provide a metaphor to aid understanding, but also a way of collating information. A story constellation approach, located within education research, is a metaphor and process used to conceptualise and understand complex stories told and retold around schools. It attempts to capture stories by and about teachers, schools and communities and locate these within the context or

what Craig refers to as 'reform' (Craig, 2007). These multiple contexts within which stories are created attempt to honour the individual and collective stories of teachers amidst a wider complex, changing environment. This matrix of stories becomes a means to, 'see into and meaningfully navigate (teachers) professional knowledge landscapes' (Soltis, 1995). A criticism of this approach could be, like many other qualitative studies, the lack of 'generalisabilty' due to the specific nature of the emergent knowledge, although the possibility of transferability does exist (Lincoln and Guba, 1998). In financially scarce markets the lack of general applicability could be seen as a drawback. Additionally, story constellations raise issues rather than solve them, nor do they provide a blueprint for action. Whilst some may see this conscious raising as an important step to potential action, through the creation and sharing of new knowledge, others may see it as a threat (Lincoln, 2003).

I have drawn on these concepts when analysing my own data, particularly a three step approach of 'Broadening', 'Burrowing' and 'Re-storying' which provides an ongoing process of construction and reconstruction of meaning which allows research data to be turned into publishable research texts (Clandinin and Connelly, 1994).

I have more broadly taken and adapted the constellation approach to analyse the data in respect of my own study. Whilst not located in a school setting, which sits within a broader context (a system), parallels can be drawn as my study focuses exclusively within a human service context within Scotland (a system).

4.11 Data Analysis Approach

Whilst results and a wider discussion of the data analysis is located elsewhere in this report, I will outline the adapted story constellation approach here.

Broadening sets up the general context within which individual stories are told. This would include the organisational cultures within which participants work, as well as the wider social, economic and political landscapes within which they are located (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). Within human services, this landscape is currently common to all participants who talked variously about such issues as changing demographics; Scottish independence; financial stringencies; increased managerialism; overly complex and constantly changing environments. Analysing narratives using this lens helps to make connections and draw out themes within the constellation system.

Burrowing refers to the reconstructing of events from the point of view of the individual participants. It refers to their lived experience based on their, for example, values, principles, early experiences, as well as their moral and ethical stance. Within this study common threads arose in relation to adherence to professional codes of practice; strong sense of social justice; early ingrained values of, for example, equality, participation, fairness and reliability.

Re-storying captures changes in participants' professional knowledge landscapes in terms of individual and group action. Through re-storying, 'new connections become probable and new ways of interacting arise' (Schwab 1954/1978:136). Whilst re-storying does not provide definitive answers, it does provide a space to think differently. Within this study, I

have agreed to make the final submission available to participants which will enable them to 're-story', based on the constellations within it.

4.12 Validity and Rigour

'You need a good set of criteria to measure the validity of your study', suggested my supervisor. Articles about validity measures abound within the literature (Neuman, 1997; Anderson and Kerr, 1999; Reason and Bradbury, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; McNiff and Whitehead, 2012). Opinion ranges from addressing specific headings such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) to calls for dismissing validity criteria altogether (Walcott, 1994; Schwandt, 2003). This questioning of quality criteria stems from arguments about whether social research is being too heavily influenced by positivist paradigm research.

My own view, based on my own professional values and practice, suggests it is important to measure the integrity of the research process and identify the quality of the end product within the final submission. Whilst I agree, any criteria used within new paradigm research differs from the positivist internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity criteria, each individual research project will lend itself to a specialised set of quality criteria. 'It is currently the case that each inquirer must search for, and defend, the criteria that best apply to his or her work' (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990:7).

It could be very easy to misrepresent information, cut corners or fake the data (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990:7). Research can be a solitary occupation so having mechanisms in place to counterbalance this is imperative in my view.

Based on the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985), I drew for assistance on their general validity criteria for trustworthiness of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability to assess the value of this study.

4.12.1 Credibility

Whilst claiming my research practice to be trustworthy, I recognise that trust and 'truth' are fragile. To claim it is trustworthy, it has to be credible to enable others' to have confidence in the 'truth' of the findings. New paradigm research has no absolute truth, rather many perspectives which are valid and provide the richness of human experience.

It is only participants' who can afford me trust and deem the process credible and this will be very much whether I can represent their views honestly and with integrity. I have engaged with the, 'messiness and complexity of (the) data interpretation in ways that (I hope)...reflect the lives of participants' (Savin-Baden and Fisher, 2002:191).

I have agreed to share my final submission with participants and previous to this, provided a copy of their transcript for amendment and comment. Whilst engaging in limited 'member checking' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), I was reluctant to seek further comment due to the busy professional lives of the participant sample. On reflection, I might have factored this process more clearly within the initial engagement but this was not the case. I was also aware that some participants were not in a position to review their transcripts due to time constraints which suggested a further request might be considered too pressurising. I will seek more general feedback following submission when I send a copy of the final study to all participants, thanking them for their contributions.

In a more informal way, I 'member checked' during many of the conversations with participants, seeking to clarify whether I had received information correctly by summarising, then asking for confirmation to check for accuracy.

I have used supervision on a regular basis to reflect on progress and gain critical challenge. Examples of this resulted in an increase in my initial sample; reframing of research and participant questions and a greater ability to move from the 'swampy lowlands' to the firmer higher ground (Schon, 1983).

Validation is an explicit process of dialogue which has taken place with critical friends, supervisors and all participants throughout. The rigor of an inquiry is how you expose your reflections, assumptions and feelings to critique (Coghian and Brannick, 2010).

Whilst claiming the above to evidence the quality of my work, on reflection I consider I was weak in relation to seeking greater opportunities for critique of my practice. Meetings with a critical friend/peer often 'fell through' with neither of us rescheduling immediately. Opportunities for more supervision sessions were available and not taken. Whilst I can argue time pressures, these were lost opportunities to deepen my knowledge, co-create new meanings and add quality to this study. I began in a mode of 'single loop inquiry', seeking to achieve, however on reflection I could have moved to 'double loop inquiry', where I was more consistently asking questions and reflecting on the value of what I was doing and the direction this was taking me (Argyris and Schon, 1996).

I have confidence in the 'truth' of this study within the context that there is no absolute truth and that each unique story is a pattern of what the teller has decided to tell at any given moment. I have attempted to represent what I heard, but inevitably what was said and what I heard will not always correspond. Equally, what I finally represent will be my interpretation. This said, I have drawn extensively on quotes, sometimes extended quotes, to represent the actual words used by participants in an attempt to hear their voices. Researchers have been criticised for producing, 'silently orchestrated' conversations and not recognising the power imbalances inherent in social research (Speedy, 2001). Taking a reflexive approach, whilst recognising there is some orchestration, has hopefully allowed for less silence and more explicit recognition of researcher opinion and bias.

4.12.2 Transferability

I suggest the processes used to successfully undertake and complete this study are transferable because they can be replicated using different data sets and this has been born out through external scrutiny as well as evidence provided within the body of the write up.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to 'thick' and 'thin' description with 'thick' referring to a high level of detail within the research rather than skimming the surface. Within this study, the use of narrative and open ended trigger questions provided rich detail about participants' experience which I would suggest could be described as 'thick'. Within the write-up I have sought to provide depth in relation to axiology, epistemology, methodology, findings and conclusions. I have appended a wide range of evidence to support the rigour and quality of the study as well as highlighted the ongoing scrutiny of both the process and product. This

paper trail of evidence provides other researchers with the ability to transfer the conclusions of this study to other situations or to repeat, as closely as possible, the procedures used in this study.

Ultimately it is the reader who will decide whether this study has enough depth to provide an understanding of how it might be transferred to other settings and contexts.

4.12.3 Dependability

Dependability relates to how consistent the findings are in order for them to be replicated. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest the use of external auditors to scrutinise both the process and product of the research. Throughout this study I have had external scrutiny from two academic supervisors. Part way through the study I requested a third supervisor with additional expertise in the topic. This has allowed three critical perspectives to evaluate whether or not the findings, interpretations and conclusions are supported by the data. Feedback from all sources has been varied and at times contradictory but of equal value. It has helped me reassess and redefine my thinking and make what was often implicitly articulated, more explicit.

Not all authors support external auditing and suggest this is because within new paradigm research there is no objective truth to compare finding to, which can lead to confusion rather than confirmation (Creswell, 1998; Miles and Huberman, 1994). In my case, I wasn't looking for confirmation but rather relished the dichotomy these diverse opinions posed which made me grapple with my own perspective more fully.

The use of NVivo9 has recorded all data, showing themes used to categorise information. I used this with hard copy notes and lists to refine my thinking and capture emerging ideas and connections. During the process of categorisation, one of my supervisors cross checked my conceptual understanding and use of themes, supporting the methods used to achieve these (Appendix 11).

4.12.4 Confirmability

Confirmability relates to the degree of neutrality or balance I have achieved in order to allow the voices of participants to be truly represented. It relates to how researcher bias is recognised and addressed.

To achieve this I have put in place a range of processes that can be scrutinised and are available within the appendices. For example, I used a tracking system as part of an 'audit trail' (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The tracking system consisted of a spreadsheet identifying key steps in the process of the research for example, when I was collecting data, I recorded who I had contacted; if and when they had provided consent; when their conversations with me took place; when the tape was transcribed and when they had responded following 'member checking' (Appendices 1). Additionally, I kept reflective diaries as a method of recording my own thoughts in relation to emerging themes and issues (Appendix 10). I used a process of triangulation which has been described as assisting qualitative researchers to achieve an account that is rich, robust, comprehensive and well developed. Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999) identify four types of triangulation, which include Methods Triangulation, Triangulation of Sources, Analyst Triangulation and Theory/Perspective Triangulation.

I have triangulated sources of evidence using the constellation approach as outlined in more detail elsewhere. I have examined participants' experience of becoming a professional told through individual stories, which provide a range of unique perspectives. I selected a sample that took account of gender (50% of sample) as well as geographical location which included both rural and urban locations. Whilst I have not drawn conclusions based on these factors within this study, it could be a basis for further research. Through an examination of the key topic, I have compared the views of a wide range of people whilst honouring their unique stories within the constellation. This type of triangulation differs from others which I could have utilised such as adopting a mixed method approach or I could have undertaken a comparative study such as investigating private as well as the public sector contexts. This could be a possibility for further study.

Whilst I could have designed the research to include other investigators as a method of increasing reflexivity, I felt it was not appropriate within this study as I had formal supervision in place and the scale was small. I did however work closely with another doctoral student whose own study is within the same topic area. Through periodic study sessions we presented our emerging ideas and writing to one another, gaining valuable insights and feedback. This challenged my assumptions, beliefs and provided me with a platform to defend my position. A letter outlining this process and confirming this activity is appended (Appendix 13). I have endeavoured to be reflexive throughout the research process recognising that, 'a researcher's background and position will effect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for the purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions' (Malterud, 2001:483).

4.13 Reflexivity

In relation to reflexive processes I have been influenced by the work of Bourdieu on dispositions (Shusterman, 1999). Bourdieu argues to unite the sociological traditions of social phenomenology and structuralism into what he describes as 'dispositions' as a middle ground. Dispositions can be interpreted as individuals' preferences or where their allegiance lies. In relation to professionalism it may be that an individual aligns with their chosen discipline, social work for example, or in a wider context, an individual may align for example, to a particular political party. Bourdieu (2010) suggests individuals' dispositions highly influence the way they operate in the world. As 'social agents' they operate within a web of inter-related spaces known as 'fields' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Within this study, this is important because I have drawn on the stories of twelve different people who closely align themselves to their chosen discipline. This has strongly influenced their perspective on the topic.

Additionally, my own 'disposition' as the researcher, due to my own internalised preferences based on such aspects as class, race, education and experience, will influence the process and outcomes of the research (Hudson 2009). These judgements may be tacitly assumed or, as in my case, more openly stated (Schutz, 1967).

Within a co-constructivist environment it is inevitable my story will be heard. As noted earlier I initially decided to integrate my own story explicitly with others and present it as part of the whole – as a thirteenth voice. On reflection, I decided to lay my story aside, favouring to prominence those of the twelve participants with my story being more implicit than explicit. Through the process of undertaking the research I do recognise that my voice will be woven throughout, through for example, my choice of study topic, design of trigger questions, methods

of analysis and co-construction of meaning alongside participant voices. Whilst seeking transparency of my own disposition, I have equally attempted to minimise overt influence on the data. Of course, simply by the way I asked questions and engaged with individuals sent unconscious signals through body language and wider signals such as symbolic communication (Lishman, 2009). Whilst recognising in action research that researchers will influence outcomes, it is incumbent on them to understand and monitor the degree of influence as it impacts on outcomes. Reflexivity is the process by which I have reflected critically on self as researcher. This 'critical subjectivity' supports the notion of the researcher gaining a conscious experience of self both as 'inquirer and respondent'. The research process becomes two way with the researcher coming to know themselves and how they impact on the process of the research (Reason and Rowan, 1981). I am in no doubt my influence on this research is threaded throughout through for example, the choice of topic; selection of sample; choice of trigger questions as well as the way these were framed and integrated into my discussions; choice of data collection and analysis and the framework of the final report. Throughout each process, I have sought to bring the self to the field....(and also)....create the self in the field through sharing, learning, relearning, creating and co-creating knowledge with others within the study (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005).

Reflexivity has been described as constantly assessing the relationship between knowledge and the ways of doing or understanding knowledge (Calas and Smircich, 1996). Being reflexive requires the assessment and reassessment of information, using a range of methods including thinking, writing and communicating with others. A process of reflexivity has been a constant throughout this study through the use of a reflective journal, peer discussions through the use of critical friends, supervision with

critical feedback as well as self reflection as described in more detail below.

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) describe the undertaking of research as an endeavour that requires risk and an exposing of self. They see research as a journey, lamenting that recipients generally only have the opportunity to see the polished end product without the 'mishaps and misfirings' that occur along the way (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:220).

Being a reflexive researcher should ensure at least some of these 'mishaps and misfirings' are shared, shaped and repaired through a process of critical reflection with self and others. I would describe my journey as arduous. At times I have variously struggled with concepts, timescales, scale of the inquiry as well as grappling with ethical, methodological and epistemological issues. Part way through the research project I negotiated a third supervisor with expert knowledge of the research paradigm which has enabled further in-depth discussion and additional critical feedback. A major concern for me has been the construction and clear articulation of a robust theoretical framework. To achieve this I have over time debated ideas and concepts both in supervision as well as with a trusted critical friend. I have used mind-mapping to record my emergent thinking as well as prototyping various graphical models within my reflective notes (Appendix 14 and 15). I have tested ideas with friends and family, often locating them in a wider context, for example, seeking an opinion from my son who is a management consultant about my definition of distributed leadership. Within his lived experience in the private sector my definition still appeared to have currency. I would consider myself generally reflexive, using colleagues and peers to gain informal feedback on my practice with an organisational coach to support more formal critique. Presenting initial

thinking and emergent findings to peers through formal seminars has provided further opportunities for feedback. As a result of critical reflexivity I have for example, introduced a pilot; increased my sample; firmed up my axiological, ontological and epistemological position and reconsidered the presentation of findings.

Chapter 5 – Research Findings

> *'What is the point of findings that are 'true' if they have been produced in circumstances that dis-empower people; that distort social relations and add to the monopoly power of dominant groups? So validity or quality in action research is also about political relations, it is fundamentally about democratising ways of creating practical knowing.... if human inquiry is not exciting, life enhancing, even pleasurable then what is it worth?'* (Reason 2000)

The findings of this study are produced from stories willingly shared. I have presented findings honestly and with the same respect as the honesty and respect afforded me by all the participants who agreed to share their stories. These narratives offer a new lens on issues of professionalism and professional identity, leadership and the impact of organisational culture on these concepts. Whether the final analysis can be described as 'life enhancing' is a matter for individual readers although I do claim the research is epistemologically and ontologically authentic and the findings are both original and significant.

5.1 Crystals and Constellations

Having analysed the research findings in light of the original five research questions below, I have added two further questions which I want to address due to their significance as emerging themes within the findings. Social research encourages emergent thinking and the co-creation of new knowledge (Reason and Bradbury, 2008). These additional headings illustrate new themes that have emerged from the data and I use them to 're-story' within a constellations approach (Craig, 2007). Drawing on a combination of different perspectives into a single study this has been described as adding rigour, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any inquiry (Flick, 2009). Using the metaphor of the data as 'crystal

prisms' illustrates this point as the light/stories reflect and refract within themselves, creating different patterns, colours and arrays as they cast off in different directions(Richardson, 2000).

I present the findings of this study using the initial five questions and two emergent themes as headings, identifying synthesis and addressing complexity across the overlaps, both throughout and more robustly, within a discussion at the end. I draw the key ideas generated from the data together at the end of each question and revisit these within the discussion.

Original five questions

1. What is the nature of the relationship between leadership and professionalism?
2. What evidence is there of distributed leadership in human services?
3. What is the relationship between professional identity and professionalism?
4. What is the significance of organisational cultures in relation to leadership and professional development?
5. What impact do constantly changing organisational environments have on creativity, innovation and continuous improvement?

Emergent themes

Theme 1 - that the ability to influence appears to be significant to leaders and professionals.

Theme 2 - that values and a sense of social justice appear to be significant to leadership and professional development.

5.2 Q1.What is the nature of the relationship between leadership and professionalism?

Initial findings drawn from the narratives suggest that within human services there is a strong link between the concepts of leadership and professionalism. Both are seen as value based and there appears to be for example, a strong emphasis on effective leaders and professionals possessing emotional intelligence, being credible and working to enhance standards.

Within participant narratives the concepts of leadership and professionalism were often referred to by participants as strongly connected. Sometimes people started talking about one concept and this quickly 'morphed' into the other. At times this was conscious and recognised, and at others it appeared unconscious as illustrated below. I have used bold type to highlight how this participant, within a few sentences moved seamlessly between talking about professionalism, to describing leadership. They appeared to merge both concepts into one.

> ***'In terms of professional, being professional,*** *I have had a think through this and I think that it's better for me personally, that it's very, very important. I would never want to be in a role when I didn't feel that I was sort of in charge of the facts, capable of doing the job and sort of able to do the job without having to constantly go and refer elsewhere..... I feel I know what I need to do and I feel if somebody was to ask, come and sit and ask me what do I do, what do I need to do, I actually know that.* ***So that is me, that is me in relation to leadership****.'*
>
> **POL2**

From the collective responses of participants, through an interrogation of the data, I collated a series of categories. By drawing words and phrases directly from transcripts of participants' stories, I made a list of those used to describe the concepts of both an effective professional and those used to describe effective leaders. Within both categories, participants

frequently articulated effectiveness by describing poor, as well as good practice, for example, illustrating how poor practice was the opposite of being effective. By establishing lists of effective characteristics, behaviours and skills for both concepts, I devised category descriptions using a key heading, for example, emotional intelligence, and assigned specific words and phrases, frequently used directly by participants, as sub headings. Sub headings are used to further illustrate the range of ideas associated with the key headings. A sample of these are shown and ascribed to specific participants as drawn from the data, for example, POL1; CLD2. Whilst other examples were offered, these tended to echo those already illustrated in the sample presented and are not offered in full. Although this might illustrate a measure of depth and consistency across participants, I consider this is shown through the x grading system. This provided me initially with two lists, one for each concept, which I cross referenced, resulting in a final list of twenty categories. I call this list the Leadership and Professional Connections Matrix (Table 2). It illustrates twenty category descriptors drawn directly from participant narratives to describe effective leaders and effective professionals on the left hand column and on the right two columns I have indicated through a scoring system explained below, whether there is a connection between each concept. The shading of the matrix relates to how closely aligned the category descriptions are between leadership and professionalism. Category descriptions 1-9 illustrate an exact match; category descriptions 10-15 show a connection with a difference in degree of emphasis on the category. Category descriptions 16-20 show no connection at all. Overall, the analysis in this table indicates that through participant narratives, the words used to describe effective professionals and effective leaders have some connection in fifteen out of twenty categories.

Table 2: Leadership and Professional Connections Matrix

Category number	Category Description	Leadership	Professionalism
1	**Emotional intelligence** Empathetic (SW1); builds relationships (EP1); good communicator (NUR1); open and a listener (CLD2); really good inter-personal skills (SW2); explicit about expectations (CLD2)	**xxx**	**xxx**
2	**Mistakes** Can make mistakes (SW2); not afraid to admit wrong (CLD2); recognises own weaknesses (POL1); supporting others in their mistakes (SOL1)	**x**	**x**
3	**Discipline specific values** Represents and upholds values (EP1): principles of own discipline (EP2)	**x**	**x**
4	**Ethical approach;** Value people (EP1); respectful (NUR1); fair (SW1); honest (NUR2); trustworthy (EDU2); genuine (POL1); authentic (EP2); being there (SW2); consistent (EDU1)	**xxx**	**xxx**
5	**Consult and involve people meaningfully;** connect with people (NUR1); help achieve consensual decisions (EP2)	**x**	**x**
6	**Credibility** has to have credibility within profession (POL1); confident (POL1); knows their craft (SW2)	**xx**	**xx**
7	**Professional Development** Continuous learner (CLD1); helping others develop and grow (EP1);recognises others' strengths (POL1); brings on leaders within profession (POL2); co-creates knowledge (CLD1); resource to others (CLD2); encourages debate (EP2); encourages feedback (EDU1); encourages others to take initiative (EP1); delegates (SW2)	**xx**	**xx**
8	**Group-work** Ensure group functions effectively (POL2); can work effectively with group (EP1); working well in team (NUR1); need to work well with others (NUR2)	**x**	**x**
9	**Efficient** Gets things done (POL1); organised (SW2); problem solving skills (CLD2)	**x**	**x**
10	**Collaboration** good collaborator (SW2); understands boundaries (SW1); puts personal gripes and prejudices aside (EP1); avoids making assumptions (EP1); puts own status aside (EDU1); broker (CLD2); interpreter across disciplines (EP1); recognises different perspectives (NUR1)	**xx**	**xxx**

11	**Commitment** Goes over and above what the job requires (EDU1); good role model (POL1); reliable (EDU1); dependable; responsible (EP2); self-reliant	**x**	**xx**
12	**Inspirational** Enthusiastic; passionate (SW2); inspiring and can enthuse others (CLD2); bring people with you	**xx**	**x**
13	**Enhancing standards/effecting change** Believe change can happen (SW1); has skill to effect and influence change (POL1); keep eye on priorities (EP2); know when to draw opinions together and make decisions (CLD2); evaluative and analytical skills (EDU2); works for better outcomes (EP1); enhance practice (POL1); using evidence (SW2); reaching standards (CLD1); upholding standards (NUR1)	**xx**	**xxx**
14	**Visionary** Helps others to shape vision (CLD2); bold; challenges status quo, innovative, break new ground, lead into the unknown (EP1); encourages innovation in others (EDU1); outward looking (SW2); positive risk taker (CLD1)	**xxx**	**x**
15	**Knowledge** Know where to access knowledge (EDU2), information; well networked (SW1); don't need to know all answers (POL2); recognises limitations of own knowledge (NUR2)	**x**	**xxx**
16	**Influencing** Not telling people what to do (EP2); doesn't have to be charismatic (CLD2); not always recognised as a L (POL2); manipulative, subversive (CLD2); make people want to follow you (POL2); influencing others (EP2); influencing the way people work (EDU1)	**xxx**	
17	**Popularity** Not always popular (NUR1); make difficult decisions (EP2); has to do difficult 'stuff' (SW2)	**x**	
18	**Professional membership** Being a member of a professional body (POL1); belonging to a profession (SW1); strong sense of professional identity		**xx**
19	**Qualifications** Having appropriate qualifications (NUR2); academic background (SW1)		**xx**
20	**Professional symbols** How you present yourself physically (EDU1); judged by others' as professional (SW2); symbols of profession (POL1); being business like (POL2)		**x**

Key

x	Emphasis	**xx**	Strong emphasis	**xxx**	Very strong emphasis

Prior to collating this matrix, I used NVivo9 as a tool to support the initial categorisation of the raw data. I created four high level categories based on the key topics of the study which were 'leadership', 'professional identity', 'professionalism' and 'organisational culture'. Through a process of reading and re-reading the data, I developed a set of sub-categories such as 'definitions of leadership' ,'barriers to being a professional', 'definitions of a professional', 'professional development', 'barriers to leadership' and the 'role of leadership'. It was interrogation of these categories and sub categories that enabled me to identify themes and issues. Please see Chapter 4 for a more thorough discussion of the use of NVivo9.

Through their use of language, this process helped me trawl the data to assess the emphasis participants' placed on specific categories and to what extent they did so. This process was iterative, gradually identifying more categories as they emerged and testing these out for emphasis across the whole dataset. I used manual lists in addition to NVivo9.

This approach allowed for depth of emphasis, as well as numbers emphasised, to be represented. Whilst categories were emerging, I considered only including them in the matrix once six (50%) or more participants had identified the issue in relation to leadership, professionalism or both. However, this might have precluded lone voices with a strong argument. I felt I had to be less 'specific' in approach to allow these voices to be heard like 'colours' refracting within the prism. Whilst not being completely precise and taking account of the above point, I have however worked loosely to a 50% 'ratio'. Using the key in Table 2, the degree of emphasis is represented by one x having 'emphasis'; two xx having 'strong emphasis' and three xxx a 'very strong emphasis'.

For example, 'Emotional Intelligence' was mentioned by eight participants and on many occasions as a very significant aspect to effective leadership. Again it was mentioned on multiple occasions and articulated in a range of ways by nine participants in relation to professionalism. It was therefore rated xxx. Alternatively, professional membership, whilst mentioned by six people as significant to being a professional and rated xx, it was not a featured in leadership discussions and therefore not rated.

By using the matrix it is possible to see that from within this study there are clear linkages between participants' conceptions of leadership and professionalism in a number of significant categories.

In section one of the table (1-9), effective professionals and leaders were both described, based on the 'emphasised' rating scale as having an equal weighting in relation to emotional intelligence; mistakes; discipline specific values; taking an ethical approach; consulting and involving people; credibility; professional development; group-work being 'efficient'.

Section two of the table (10-15) highlights further linkages in respect of other categories although in this case the emphasis differed across categories. Effective professionals were described as having the ability to collaborate; show commitment; enhance standards and require greater knowledge than leaders. More emphasis was placed on leaders having greater vision and inspiration than on professionals.

Finally section three of the table (16-20) identifies the categories where there were no clear links between how effective leaders and professionals were described. Effective leaders were described as strongly influencing as well as often not being popular due to difficult decisions that have to

be made – often seen as for the greater good. On the other hand, professionals were described as being unique in respect of their having to have a level of qualification acceptable to enter their profession which would be regulated by a professional body with codes of practice and possibly registration. Additionally, some people suggested outward symbols helped identify people as belonging to specific professions.

Categories used to describe both effective leaders and professionals in equal measure, (1-9), which include, emotional intelligence, values and ethics, promoting professional development and working with groups are more akin to new models of leadership identified within the literature. Such models, which would include distributed leadership, place a far greater emphasis on collaboration, ethical practice, acknowledgment of dispersed expertise and employee engagement (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2005; Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2012; Hamel, 2009; ESRC, 2009).

5.2.1 Summing Up

The evidence from the data in relation to question one indicates there are more similarities than differences between participants' conceptualisations of effective leadership and professionalism. Many of the words and categories identified to describe both concepts also point to an understanding of leadership that is closer to distributed, 'new, new era' models rather than an individual charismatic model (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2005).

Within their stories about becoming a professional, participants were asked their views on what might make a 'good' professional and what might make a 'good' leader. People tended to draw on their experiences of others' as leaders and professionals, citing attributes, values,

characteristics, behaviours and attitudes of individuals they had encountered in both a positive and negative sense. Within the trigger questions (Appendix 8) I asked participants whether there might be a connection between leadership and professionalism. Whilst there may be some existing connection, I am aware that the result of asking the question in this way will have an influence on participant responses.

Questions of this kind are subjective and can be seen to point participants in a particular direction. For example, when asking about positive experiences, participants could be expected largely to identify positive outcomes, whether these are drawn from positive or negative experiences. The words chosen to ask this question could have a significant impact on the listener. Questions in particular, 'do more than ask: they solicit and convey information and focus and suggest answers' (Beckman 2014:2).

Although asking questions about positive professionals and leaders, I was however careful not to influence participants' views further by asking supplementary questions, in an attempt to avoid further potential manipulation. Participants' responses varied in range yet still resulted in remarkably similar themes as identified within Table 2. Whilst not suggesting these themes are definitive, they do illustrate a commonality of views across participant narratives in some key specific areas.

5.3 Q2.What evidence is there of distributed leadership in human services?

The data identified a wide range of examples of distributed leadership across Human services although this was often more implicitly rather than explicitly described within participant narratives. Whilst participants were presented with a definition of distributed leadership at the outset of each

discussion, there was some evidence that when talking about leadership, some participants' defaulted to a hierarchical model as the following examples illustrate,

> '*I am a leader because I am in charge of a department and so I lead learning within a department, I direct learning within a department I am the person within my high school that decides exactly how we are going to get our goals achieved. I also have a responsibility to lead the learning of others within my department.*'
>
> EDU2

> '.....*she kind of lead the team and she was clever enough that she didn't make it look too obvious so we would always have discussions but she was always dead clever....*'
>
> NUR2

However, despite this being a feature across some stories, there were a range of very clear examples where participants described putting themselves forward or being given opportunities within their organisation to be a leader. These opportunities were frequently available from the start of people's careers and tended not to be located in formal leadership roles. Often these were opportunities to lead short term projects, groups or clubs. For some, volunteering to take on a leadership role appeared to be a conscious decision,

> *'When everyone else takes a step back, I don't. It's not that I take a step forward, as such. When everyone else moves back, I sometimes knowingly say, well, yer, I might have a go at that...or if I am exercised about it I will say, I will have a go at that.'*
>
> CLD1

> *'Well I suppose to get to the next stage in your career you are always aiming to take responsibilities on. Prior to, well I suppose initially prior to, becoming an Assistant Principle Teacher... I was taking clubs within the school and so I was trying to kind of coach, nurture, foster the pupils within my guide whether it is football teams, engineering clubs or chess clubs'*
>
> EDU2

Sometimes when participants felt they were given chances by their organisation to develop as a leader, in what might be described as within

a distributed leadership model, these conversations tended to focus on influential people within the organisation who had helped them develop their practice and gain confidence. Sometimes this was due to a positive experience although at other times it was learning how not to lead from observing and experiencing poor practice.

> '*There are times when you come up against somebody who is particularly good at developing people who are lower down the organisation than them and they will just give you something to do that's beyond your current role and responsibilities and what I've always done is I've sought out those opportunities, I've volunteered to do things'*
>
> POL1

> *'I would have to say the majority of leaders which I have experienced, they gave me the kind of negative counter as my way of learning with what I did want to be happening. I think that is very sad.'*
>
> EP1

Another aspect which frequently emerged from participants' stories was that whilst they might not have initially defined some of these opportunities as distributed leadership, they did talk about reflecting on past experiences and then reframing their experience within a distributed leadership paradigm. Sometimes this had occurred prior to this study and for others, it appeared to be as a result of the study focus. Reflective processes were employed by many participants through the story telling process, with a number of people commenting on both how insightful the process had been and how they had remembered and reframed previous experiences. Building on the work of Kolb (1984), reflection has gained enormous interest in the literature to support professional practice with a range of models being presented (Brookfield, 1995; Boud and Walker, 1998; Eraut, 2004). Within different disciplines however, what is understood by reflective practice varies considerably (Fook et al, 2006). In most cases within the study reflection was used as a mechanism to look back and make sense of previous experience. This desire to reframe,

based on new conceptualisations, closely links to Craig's 're-storying' (2007).

> *'I never really thought of myself as a leader and it wasn't until I started sort of looking for promotions, started thinking about these things that you actually realise that even from the first day you join the Police you are a leader, because you are the person who is out there making critical decisions you are the person who is out there dealing with incidents and having to direct people and having to give your opinion and not telling them what to do and by so by default you become a leader very, very quickly'* POL2

> *'The Community Art Project was one of them (opportunity to lead), that was something which was about leading the project but I didn't really think about it at the time like I just thought, what a nice way of getting people together.'* EDU1

Many organisations were described as having provided opportunities for participants to lead at different levels throughout their careers. When asked this specific question, one participant suggested this was commonplace, whilst others suggested it might be more common for them to seek these opportunities out themselves. Evidence from narratives would suggest that between participants being afforded opportunities by their organisation to lead (at all levels) and seeking these opportunities out for themselves, there were and are ongoing opportunities available. One participant echoed this in his response to whether he had been offered opportunities to lead throughout his career,

> *'Yer, all the time'*
>
> CLD1

There were many examples where participants' talked about the opportunities afforded them to lead, often in quite frightening situations and early on in their career. Narratives suggested people had gained confidence from such opportunities and whilst scary at times, they had grown professionally.

> *'I found myself around a table of people that you know, that are really senior within the NHS and they were interested but I had gone from being co-ordinator of this wee project and having a bit of a spotlight and really*

being put on the spot I think in terms of, why should we give you the money, what do you do, what are your outcomes, what difference does this really make, how can you prove it works really? You had to respond to that on your feet I think.'

CLD2

'*Well I was in my probationary year and an opportunity came up, described as Professional Development Initiative which was a national thing. So being part of that then lead that and obviously small piece of research on it and then feedback that and implement it and you were allowed to do that. Nobody got in your way. Just pleased someone waswanting to do stuff.'*

EP1

'...*my first post was actually in Kidney Transplant Unit... which isn't there anymore, but that was quite a small unit and I was only 22 at the time... and you were given quite a lot of responsibility, you were in charge of people, you were allowed to go to meetings and contribute to things, you were given sort of a bit of importance being part of a team. I quite liked that and you were listened to and that was probably quite a good thing because at quite an early age I was given quite a lot of responsibility which I quite liked.'*

NUR1

Such comments were commonplace within narratives of responsibility being given at an early stage in people's careers which was also felt by some to have diminished over time.

This next example is illustrative of an inspirational leader in a formal role who supported the development of others, particularly this participant, as a leader in his organisation from an early age. This participant was still on probation when he was afforded the opportunity to lead a major piece of work. I have abridged it slightly to protect confidentiality without losing the essence and offer it 'almost' in its entirety due to the important point I feel it makes,

'Well actually there is one that comes springing into my mind when you were talking there, and I was still on my probation, I was still in my first two years. Your first year of probation you always had a tutor and the tutor looks after you, and in your second year you are kind of pushed out into the wide world.....and off you pop.

....it was a Friday night and I worked in Perth in the City Centre ....This particular Friday night we had been on and we were quite short staffed. There had been trouble outside the nightclub but actually the trouble had emanated from a pub round the corner....It was quite significant but and I had dealt with it and sort of dealt with what we had, there was a few of us there.
Come the end it was nightshift, it was 4 or 5 o'clock. I thought this isn't good enough. I need to do something else.
So I just battered out a report saying this is the horrible thing that happened tonight and this is what I think is going to happen tomorrow night and we need to do something about it and sent it away to my Inspector. So the following night I came in and I still hadn't had 18 week service yet. There were loads of people, loads of cops.....and the Inspector came in...and says "right ok there is a reason why I have got you all in, right I will hand you across to ....., tell them what it is you have got in your report and tell them what happened last night".
So that was fine, I just told the story cause I like telling stories, so I just told the story and that was fine and I thought, oh my god I am responsible for all this. As I said, it wasn't any attempt at leadership, wasn't any attempt at anything else but then I found myself, my god look at the influence I had by just putting in a report that said this is what we should do.'

POL2

This participant didn't identify himself as a leader in any way at this time, yet with hindsight he reframed his understanding of the situation, recognising he was afforded an opportunity to lead. He went on later to identify in his story how this incident impacted on his later career in relation to improved confidence, respect and his ability to communicate with others.

Many participants talked positively about their experiences of leading in non formal roles. They clearly relished the responsibility afforded them by the organisation and talked again about growing in confidence. Some people suggested these opportunities have lessened over time with some making a link to the rise of more risk adverse organisations and some cultures that appear to adopt a more managerial approach.

5.3.1 Summing Up

Whilst there were many examples within the narratives of opportunities to lead, either being taken or given within organisations, these were sometimes more implicitly described rather than being explicit. This tended to be because people didn't always label them as leadership opportunities and often, only in hindsight and on reflection, did they reframe them. There was evidence of opportunities being available throughout people's careers, often from an early stage with reports that these opportunities afforded greater confidence, pride and professional expertise. There was some suggestion that such opportunities to lead might be less available now within more risk-averse organisations.

5.4 Q3 What is the relationship between professional identity and professionalism?

The research findings indicated there was a relationship between professional identity and professionalism. This was however, largely dependent on individual conceptualisations of professionalism. As highlighted through the work of Moureaux et al (2011), and discussed within the literature review, there are many conceptions about the nature of professionalism and how this might be translated in practice. For example, within their research some people identified 'looking professional' through dress and demeanour, important whilst others identified an ability to effectively complete tasks of primary importance. Within participant stories, some of these differences emerged and shone a light onto different perspectives and the relationships that exist between professional identity and professionalism.

One participant, and I use extended extracts from her story below to illustrate these points, had been offered opportunities to develop her career into more hierarchical management positions but had consciously

chosen to remain 'in practice' where she felt she could continue to make a real difference to people's lives. By doing this she might be afforded less professional status and some might argue, less of an ability to effect change, particularly at a strategic level, due to her potential lack of hierarchical positional power within an organisation. However, through a series of opportunities to 'lead' throughout her career, this participant identified in depth skills to influence, negotiate, communicate and work across professional boundaries that allowed her, from a relatively junior position, to effect major change. Her power base does not appear to be tied to her professional identity and status as a professional or position in an organisation. It appears more to emanate from a professional confidence in her ability, an ethical commitment to those she serves and a strong knowledge base from which to argue her case and make defensible decisions.

> '*I was only about 24 or 25 when I applied for the Co-ordinators post for that and I got it ....I was quite inexperienced I had to set up this project....*
> *.....I found myself around a table of people that you know, that are really senior within the NHS and they were interested but I had gone from being co-ordinator of this wee project and having a bit of a spotlight and really being put on the spot I think in terms of, why should we give you the money, what do you do, what are your outcomes, what difference does this really make, how can you prove it works really? You had to respond to that on your feet I think know what you want to do and you are thinking, I am going to have to try and guide this process.....*
> *.....**the NHS is much more precious about its professional identity, they introduce themselves as to say what qualification they have or what banding they are working within, that means nothing to me, you can be working on the highest band but you might not be behaving professionally in my opinion.**.....*
> *Yes I think more about the opportunities I haven't taken which would have been to step up the ladder within a departmental or service council context because I would be getting paid more money than I am now by doing a job I like less. So that was a conscious decision that I was lucky enough to be able to make and also just understanding my own motivation and realising the importance of those to me in my job....*
> *.....not taking these opportunities would have given me a career path that would have gone down a particular more defined route I think, so creating I think opportunities to do what I love doing in a role that might not have such of a clear identity, it might not be such a clear career pathway has*

influenced my professional identity but it has made it maybe fussier but that is okay.'

CLD2

Ultimately, this participant equates professional identity, not with grades, status or outward appearance but with the identification of positive professional values, principles and behaviours. She had a very strong sense of professional identity yet had no desire to gain personal power. Saying this, she had a great deal of professional power and influence due to her confidence, abilities and passion to serve. This type of leadership chimes well with that proposed within the literature by Greenleaf (1996) who suggests a servant-leadership model. Within this model, a strong sense of service to others promotes a desire to enhance practice through leading forward. This selfless approach and desire 'to make a difference' was a repeated finding within and across the narratives.

This was summed up in another way by one participant who described her disregard for outward 'trappings' of professionalism such as trophies, certificates and as the previous participant raised, a need by some to define themselves by their qualification level. Whilst recognising that many of these symbols have a meaning, she argued that the meaning was within a context rather than to be used as a status symbol. For example, in her view a certificate is legitimate recognition of achievement but framing and hanging it on an office wall turns it into a status symbol.

'I think that's why they do it, I think it's to almost say to people because it is a culture (in my) service, the vast, I mean I'm probably fairly unusual in that I don't have certificates all over my wall and a load of photographs and this, that and the other but for a lot of people, it's their way of saying I'm the boss and that's why I am the boss and you know this is why I hold authority because I've got the certificates to show that I've done the various courses, people know I've done these courses....

.....it's cultural and it's moving away slightly now but it was cultural that you wear certificates of completed courses. I mean mine are probably in the drawer somewhere so if anybody ever asked me for them, you know if the IT records crashed and burned and they couldn't find them, I could

produce them but I've never felt the need to put them on the wall like badges of honour.'

POL1

A strong theme emerging from stories suggested that often within human services, peoples' professional identities stretch beyond their working day. People frequently described being a professional not simply as a 'job', but more of a 'vocation' or even a 'lifestyle'. Some participants saw their personal and professional identities bound up together,

'I think that is because of the professional identity that I feel I need to be less gregarious outside work and it extends past just being in here every day. It is about, how you want people to see you, I see myself as being a professional within the community, that my job doesn't leave when I walk out the door. I am still seen as the Police and or he is the Chief Inspector in the Police, you better watch yourself type of thing. So whether I like it or not and I think it is in a lot officers, the majority of the officers minds that you still have a responsibility within your day to day life in terms of giving off that sort of professional aura in what people see, you are responsible and professional but how you live your life as well. So yes it does shape how you are, it does shape how I feel about being professional. I feel that I have a responsibility to be professional in everything I do really. I cannot just come in and do my work and then go away and do what I like, it is sort of a life choice.'

POL2

'*You know it's not 'piece work', it's about, you know, we are taken on and paid for by the people, well I know not directly....and to try and do something and it's not about you come in at 9 and you leave at 5, and 'I'm sorry I've done my time here and if that's not been done then that's not my fault. It's about this idea of taking ownership.'*

EP2

'*But you know, when I joined the police almost 30 years ago, and even sort of 10 or 20 years ago, it's a way of life.. it's not just a job. It's a bit like a number of other professions, I think medicine is probably the same, social work, you know there is a number of them that it almost defines who you are and it defines who you are within society and it actually restricts who you end up being friends with, in the social circles you walk in and this, that and the other.*

POL2

This theme was developed by others to include discussions about being bound by professional Codes of Practice which extended beyond the workplace and the importance of recognising and working within personal/professional boundaries. An even stronger theme, which will be

discussed in more depth later in these findings, was the overwhelming driver of social justice that motivates and inspires people to operate professionally. A real sense of social justice was commonly addressed through discussions about professional identity in that, without such a driver, there would be no point for some people being a professional within a human service context.

Gaining a sense of professionalism and 'belonging' was described within many stories as developing over time and with experience – which might be expected, 'it comes with age and experience'. Positive feelings of being 'in' rather than 'out' of a group link closely to identity as highlighted within the literature (Stets and Burke, 2000). Often participants reflected on these points, highlighting their often strengthened sense of 'being a professional' deriving from activities such as gaining constructive feedback, time to reflect and formal and informal opportunities to learn.

Reflecting on professional practice appeared to be hugely important, not only to revaluate and learn, but also to deepen understandings of professional role and expectation. These complex cycles of reflection appear to support an embedding of professional identity and confidence in participants. Working within cultures that encourage constructive feedback and support processes of formal and informal learning appeared to strengthen a sense of belonging to a profession and therefore a sense of professional identity.

> '*I think a lot of it was having some of the things that I was doing well recognised by other people. Coming from recognition that's working well,... so I suppose that kind of growing confidence, I was able to do that and to manage situations that were difficult and confrontational and in a way wasn't just about responding emotionally.... so I suppose the growth in confidence in my own skills to manage that stuff and then a lot of it was the training courses.... just getting where you do have this time to reflect and to write and to think and confidence in your ability to do it academically and to write clearly.'*
>
> SW1

> *'I think the most profound influences have been other people who I have either watched and observed and learned from or who one or two of the manager's I've had who have been able to help me reflect and have reflected back to me what they've seen in terms of the way I've been operating.'*
>
> SW1

There was evidence within the data that professionals need to have specific knowledge which is backed up within the literature through the notion that professional status is gained through higher level qualifications with universities being the gateway to such achievement.

However, this was countered throughout participant stories with more subtle narratives which suggested that whilst professionals need to 'know' (have a degree of knowledge), they do not have to 'know everything'. Further narratives expressed views about the importance of making mistakes; learning from them; continuously learning; taking risks and testing things out. Participants shared views about not getting things right first time or not having all the answers,

> '*So the first year actually what I tried to do was create small groups and asking people to take on a bit and they can plan for and that didn't work. People just didn't know how to do it... So I had to rethink*.'
>
> EP1
>
> '....*did I have all the answers no I absolutely didn't, did I have the knowledge required to actually make things happen no I didn't but did I have the insight to say that doesn't work and this would work better, yes I did.'*
>
> POL2

Narratives were peppered with the importance of professionals and leaders continually learning and supporting the learning of others,

> '*I think somebody who strives for continuous improvement or an organisation strives for continuous improvement you know somebody who never, who appreciates they're never quite there and there is always new things to learn, there is new people to learn from and you look out beyond your sphere of everyday interaction, for good practice elsewhere, for different ways of doing things and for keeping as best as you can up with the times if not ahead of the times, and looking for different sources of information you know and going beyond your own boundaries.*

POL1

'I think what people are getting clearer about is if people are interested I will happily support them to do it but it has got to relate to what we are doing as our business, there are strategic areas and they need to make a case for why we are doing that. Before you could go off wherever you liked but we don't do that now. That doesn't mean I am not interested in innovation, just tell me how you think this might help and then just go for it.'

EP1

'*I think a good professional has a grounding in theory but that is related to practice and as best they can live some of that out and continue to learn both themselves but in conjunction with learning from other people'*

CLD1

'I think the most profound influences have been other people who I have either watched and observed and learned from or who one or two of the manager's I've had who have been able to help me reflect and have reflected back to me what they've seen in terms of the way I've been operating. Reading and training and learning and writing stuff, I suppose the formal education side but a lot of is about, I think the most profound thing is other people and observing how other people manage those very difficult situations and I've just tried to go on learning from that and looking at the way people manage these things. It's amazing, that's one of the joys of social work, there is some nonsense but there are some remarkably skilful people who do incredible things'

SW1

This evidence suggests both a sense of professionalism and professional identity are not bound up in notions of being 'an expert' and having all the answers but rather in continuous learning and learning from mistakes.

5.4.1 Summing Up

There is strong evidence from within the data that there is a relationship between professionalism and professional identity. Within a human service context, participants strongly identified the importance of feeling a sense of belonging to their chosen profession as well as achieving individual high standards as a professional person. Both these aspects were driven by a very strong sense of social justice. When in place, both aspects provided a strong sense of professional identity. People talked about their job as a 'way of life' and there was a clear sense of

service. These beliefs result in behaviours that promote ethically principled practice which is, by and large, not bound up in concerns about status and individual power. However, participants identified the need for organisational cultures where high standards were expected and achievable and environments where they were supported and could feel a sense of pride. Cultures that support such approaches were clearly identified as including opportunities to reflect, learn, make mistakes and gain constructive feedback.

5.5 Q4 What is the significance of organisational cultures in relation to leadership and professional development?

As identified from narratives, and noted within the previous finding, organisational cultures were identified as an important factor in relation to participants' sense of being a professional and growing sense of professional identity. It was also identified as important for the development of effective leadership and professionalism within organisations.

When considering their position as professionals and leaders within their own organisations, participants often referred to the organisational climate or culture as having a significant bearing on how they practice. For example,

> '*So the organisation does influence whether or not you can be the leader that you want to be and maybe the leader that I want to be maybe isn't necessarily the kind of leader (my organisation) wants me to be and I have to adapt that a bit.*'
>
> POL2

Whilst this participant recognised a changing culture may require a change in his practice, for others this can present moral dilemmas. One participant described practice within her organisation being unprofessional

where she had to decide whether to stay or go. Other participants talked about cultures of 'bullying' and workplaces where poor practice has been condoned. This spread of negative images might be expected within twelve diverse stories that span decades of practice but they were equally balanced with examples of positive environments where good practice is encouraged, innovation occurs and participants' have a real sense of belonging. Within such positive cultures, as you might expect, participants described an ability to thrive and 'be professional' with the opposite being the case in more negative environments.

> *'Where we work, we are listened to, we get to participate a lot in decisions, participate in making protocols, we run our own clinics, we are nurse lead clinics, so we do feel professionals because we are not treated... we are treated as such. But I think that is different wherever you work'*
>
> NUR1

> *'I think it also really impacts on how you do what you do in the work place as well because of the situation that has arisen within (my organisation) over the past couple of years, when they made the decision to try and close the (one of my work areas) and it was done in such an appalling way. That struck to the core of a lack of professionalism for me. It also struck to that moral justice, social justice influence from my mother and this desire to fight other peoples' battles so you had three trigger points which meant I couldn't do anything but fight it. I was very aware that, had the same regime, the same management regime stayed in place, I would probably be out of a job by now, because they would have made me redundant in some form. So I knew I was signing my own kind of death warrant but at the same time I felt very strongly that overriding sense of right and wrong took over everything.'* EDU1

The relationship between professional and leadership development and organisational culture was touched on by some participants as they reflected within narratives about their own responses to situations in the past. The following participant highlights a dilemma for him personally in relation to work demands within what he perceived as an unsupportive culture. He questions whether so early on in his career, he was able or skilled enough at the time to fully analyse the situation and whether he could have positively influenced the situation. His story, one of several

about the impact of culture, illustrates the ongoing impact such an experience can have on employees and the need to be able to analyse organisational behaviour in order to make a response. This participant clearly would have liked to challenge the negative culture of the time but felt unequipped to do so,

> `...*it was quite a bullying sort of culture from the person at the top and that kind of contrast between having quite a strong personal feeling that this was an important thing to be doing for reasons to do with these children's' needs' .....and I suppose over time, maybe now looking back, I can stand back more from that sort of stuff and try and analyse what was happening and how I am responding to it and see that as part of what you have to do as a social worker and probably what you have to do as any sort of person, as part of a complex organisation is to be able to just step outside your emotional reaction to people in situations and try and work out, okay what's going on here and how can I respond and if I respond in this way, what helps and what hinders. But at that stage, I suppose it's very much a journey and to begin with it was just kind of absorbing what was going on and reacting to it*.'
>
> SW1

Some specific participant narratives suggested organisational culture was important in respect to whether people felt able to develop as leaders. Leadership within these contexts was often described as developing skills to influence, make a difference, innovate and help develop others.

Within some organisations, participants clearly felt supported to take a lead 'at any level' within the organisation, whereas in others these opportunities seemed to be eroding,

> `*It is about the organisation having the courage isn't it and the people at the top because I have been talking to Nursing staff and Social Workers and they are telling me when they first started they had a lot more responsibility and it has all been taken away now at that level. It is the same sort of thing - it is the organisation.'*
>
> POL2

> *'Yes it is the organisation that doesn't want to risk that but we have to because we are slimming the upper ranks so if we are doing that we need to be prepared to give responsibility lower down.*'
>
> POL2

> *'I think everybody being part of what we are about here is so critical and the difficulty of that argument is that actually it may be our structures that undermine people's ability to feel that they have permission to say, this is what we are about and I am part of that. And you know we do undermine that by some of the ways we behave in organisations as well. Very hierarchical structures in terms of the way personnel or finance are organised do creature a culture of hierarchical structures which kind of imbue the whole organisation...'*
>
> SW1

Evidence suggests there is an appetite within human services to develop structures and create cultures that support leadership at any level; allow individuals to make a difference; support innovation and promote professional development.

There was a clear wave of criticism for organisations that do not develop cultures which support these aims, nor promote inclusion and belonging and where staff feel marginalised or disenfranchised. It is within such cultures that innovation, creativity and growth appear to be stifled. One participant made a clear distinction between her 'old' working environment and her current more positive culture. It was clear from her story that she is able to develop as a professional and support the development of others within a more empowering environment that supports change. She specifically identified innovation as an important element to foster change, yet identified this could be stifled dependent on the risk averse nature of the organisational culture,

> *'I know I have changed, where I previously worked I didn't push it as much as I couldn't have guaranteed I would have got the backing and I suppose what I do tend to do is work within a system to a large degree and if you actually think the system is not going to support you and there is a level of risk I won't take, I'll be able to do a little bit on my own I wasn't as brave before as I am able to be in my current context..... I think the 'ability to lead yourself into the unknown is what innovation is about' because it won't be innovative if it has already been done so there has to be risk management done so you have to look and think about the things that might go wrong, what might be gained out of it and just kind of be prepared to go with that.'*
>
> EP1

5.5.1 Summing up

Within the data, organisational cultures were identified as extremely significant in relation to the development of professionalism as well as leadership. This was identified through a wide range of references to culture within many contexts across human services. One key point I will return to later was that in many instances it appeared, particularly earlier in their careers, participants had little understanding about how organisations work. This lack of knowledge could lead to an inability, and as was described by one participant, a sense of powerlessness about how to respond to or challenge ineffective or 'bullying' cultures.

There was evidence again of contemporary cultures that are risk-averse in human services which fail to recognise and give permission for people to take greater professional responsibility. There was also evidence that such cultures can stifle innovation and creativity.

5.6 Q5 What impact do constantly changing organisational environments have on creativity, innovation and continuous improvement?

As previously noted, narratives have identified the need for and importance of innovation in human service workplaces, most clearly defined by one participant as being the, '*ability to lead yourself into the unknown is what innovation is about, because it won't be innovative if it has already been done' EP1.*

Creativity was valued as a mechanism to bring about change and the motivation by people in human services was summed up in the following quote,

> '*I think there are lots of motivated people out there who have great ideas about taking things forward for the department, for their teams, for their colleagues, for the service'*
>
> SW2

Narratives were full of examples where participants identified their professional responsibility as bringing about continuous improvement. This was seen as a bedrock of both being an effective professional as well as enshrined within participants professional identities. Whilst continuous improvement may already be mandatory for some across human services, participant stories were thin on references to regulatory body requirements. Generally narratives about improvement emanated from individuals' sense of professional pride, duty and commitment both towards their own learning as well as that of their peers,

> '... *you know the joy when you go on training courses and actually being forced to step outside as you just become aware of all this knowledge and information that's there.'*
>
> SW1

> '*One of the things I've tried to keep going and tried to keep influencing is that bit about saying, it's OK saying if your upset in the team, it's OK to say well I am really struggling here guys because there is this bit about you are a professional so you are not allowed to say you don't know answers and you are not allowed to say actually I feel like I am going to have a wee greet here, it's OK to do those bits it's healthy, it's healthy to get it out and talk about it in the safe environment in the team room rather than take it home to your man or your kids or whatever life you have got going on. So we do try hard to do that and we do try hard to make sure that we don't come across as dismissive maybe even when the newly qualified staff come out with bloomers that we have a wee laugh and we think oh god, kind of thing, but they are still learning so we have to try and create or try and promote this environment where you know what, we were at that stage once, and we would have struggled and we need to remember that.'*
>
> SW2

Against this backdrop, the impact of constantly changing organisational environments was often harshly felt and seen as a barrier to the promotion of innovation, creativity and continuous improvement. This was articulated in narratives that compared less austere times when workloads were perceived to be smaller alongside a picture that

suggested, despite the motivation of staff to be creative, innovative and continuously learning, overly high workloads acted as an impediment,

> '*My sense is that it's got worse actually, it's a bit depressing to say that... but I think my sense is, it has got worse and maybe it's because my early experiences were within the voluntary sector and certainly (the organisation I worked for) then had a reputation for allowing people to do a lot of training and creating that space and I actually worked under a great deal less pressure just in terms of numbers than we would in a statutory setting... and with this pressure, it is very difficult when there is massive service pressure to create that same space... but it's not hard to see the counter argument which is yes, but that means all the more reasons for making it happen...because I suppose I see an awful lot of people who are hunkered down to their job and running like crazy to try and achieve what they need to achieve and finding very little time to step outside of it and reflect and use that reflection....'*
>
> SW1

> '*...your case load comes first and that's the reality of it. I think there are lots of motivated people out there who have great ideas about taking things forward for the department, for their teams, for their colleagues, for the service. Whether they get the time to do it or the backing to do it I don't think.... I would like to think that managers are not just dismissing staffs' ideas or abilities but you know yourself the minute something happens in the office and folk need to down tools and deal with what comes across your desk then that's the reality that we work with and at the end of the day that's what we are paid to do. I'm not paid to sit through there and come up with great ideas about how we can run this department, I'm paid to go out and make sure children are safe and that's it, that's what I am paid to do.'*
>
> SW2

There were reflections across the stories about the complexity of working within organisations and recognition that not all environments are the same. As has been discussed, culture plays a large part in determining such issues as whether people feel they have permission to learn, (in some environments it is seen as 'not working' when reading a professional text or journal); whether 'space' can be found to allow refection; how supported people feel to innovate and be creative. Within one narrative this was summed up well, suggesting the need for greater communication about these issues within the workplace,

> '.... *is it difficult to actually give people that space to do it or is it difficult for people to take that space when they've got a million other things that they are trying to do and where is that kind of interplay between the way the leadership of the organisation does or doesn't give people the permission and people themselves have expectations about what they are trying to do and for whatever reason kind of find it difficult to step out of one role and see things very differently'*
>
> SW1

Generally, narratives suggested that participants recognised that constantly changing organisational environments were part of life in human services and that all staff were, 'in it together'. There was recognition that those in more formal leadership roles have difficult decisions to make and do not always have the answers. However, there was strong evidence to suggest a willingness to be supportive, take on greater responsibility and assist with problem solving. This appeared to be offered within a context underpinned by social justice, with an overall aim that ensured all end users were provided with an ever improving quality of service.

Constraining organisational structures, rather than constantly changing environments, were identified within some narratives as impeding creativity and innovation. Rigid environments which restricted movement across workplaces were seen as stifling cross fertilisation of ideas and ability to progress, which could lead to lack of motivation. This loss of motivation could have negative effects, not only by restricting new ideas, but also in relation to the overall development of professional and organisational growth.

> *'We are very lucky we have got a bit more money in funding ...we are allowed to go to more lectures and stuff, we get more study days because we have to keep up to date ....In other areas I think probably, it's been 15 years since I worked in another place, but I don't think there is a lot of places that have these opportunities, there isn't opportunities to develop because they are probably stuck. That is what happens with the banding, they looked at your role and you were banded accordingly and only if you develop yourself more....it doesn't matter if you do a degree or you might*

do some course but unless you actually go for a job with that course you do not get any benefit for doing these things, which is not very motivating for people'

NUR1

Another factor which relates to constantly changing environments that stifle creativity, innovation and continuous improvement suggests the current culture across human services of evaluation, regulation and inspection does exactly what it is not intended to do - it de-motivates staff. There was a strong sense, despite participants' frequently admitting to coping, if not relishing change, that the pace and perceived need for change within human services was at times relentless and unfathomable. This could leave very experienced staff questioning their worth.

'More paperwork is incumbent with the job and because of that more demands are out with working with pupils to justify what we are doing within a classroom. Curriculum for Excellence is the big thing in Education just now and whilst there are many, many great things about it, the challenge of this new idea is that time and time again we are being questioned as to whether we are doing the job correctly. There are more because we are being allowed to have more of our own say in developing work immediately we are being questioned "is this right". We are being analysed more often and questioned "why are you doing this" "why are you doing that" A lot of policies are coming into place to kind of change your practice. I have got nothing against change however I feel that my experience would suggest I am doing things adequately well just now, my results have shown that and now what I am doing, I am changing, it is not as much I feel I am changing for the sake of changing it's that time and time again I am being questioned, it feels that you are not doing that job properly.....you are questioned about not doing your job properly. I think it is an underlying feeling within the profession and that is not me as an individual, my colleagues of similar standing, 20 years plus, are equally feeling that we have to justify what we are doing within the classroom and that is hard.'

EDU2

Other narratives suggested it is time for change, with participants proposing organisations should support professional development, creativity and innovation by adopting a less 'nanny state' approach. A 'nanny state' has been used to describe how governments micro-manage

what might otherwise be seen as the responsibility of the citizen or community. Such 'nannying' can lead to de-motivation and the non maximisation of human capacity which in turn can stifle creativity and suppress change. In this context I am using it to suggest that organisations which micro-manage professionals within their employ can experience the same de-motivating outcomes. Several participants suggested that if organisations enabled staff to take more responsibility at an earlier stage in their career, this might build in greater professional responsibility and potential leadership capacity. This idea is akin to what has been described earlier as distributed leadership or the opportunity for people to be leaders at all levels within an organisation.

> *'... as a organisation we are a bit risk averse, we think people who have only got 3 years service cannot do that, we say leave it to the people that know. When in actual fact they do know and we need to trust them and (my colleague) was likening it to when he joined the military and did his military training and in his first posting he was in charge of a team, he was away to Northern Ireland and he was in Northern Ireland for a day and a bomb had gone off at a particular location and he was in charge. Within sort of 2 ½ years of starting in that organisation he was making decisions, carrying fire arms, doing all of that stuff as a young man and we were sitting and he was saying, if I can do it, then why are we not allowing people out there to do it? It is about just having that, having the courage to do that. It is about the organisation having the courage isn't it and the people at the top because I have been talking to Nursing staff and Social Workers and they are telling me when they first started they had a lot more responsibility and it has all been taken away now at that level. It is the same sort of thing - it is the organisation. Yes it is the organisation that doesn't want to risk that but we have to because we are slimming the upper ranks so if we are doing that we need to be prepared to give responsibility lower down.'*
>
> POL2

A final issue highlighted from the narratives in relation to this question recognised the tenacity of workers to 'get the job done', despite turbulent environments. Examples of how participants 'worked within the cracks' to achieve positive outcomes were impressive. Again this appeared to be driven by strong moral convictions and a real sense of professional

identity that suggested 'this is what professionalism is about' – we make things happen despite the obstacles,

> '*So it does impact but I think I am not uncomfortable with working in an environment that changes a lot and it is time pressured and all of that kind of stuff. I am ok with that...I think it might be harder for folk whose targets go up and whose teams get slimmer and then they have got to deliver the same service with fewer resources and what not, I can see that that can be more of a challenge perhaps.*
>
> CLD2

> *'I thought we were meant to be risk takers? I do not mean in a silly way, so that safety net is there, it's provided there for you as an emerging professional, did that not used to be the language? I always find it a bit strange when, both people that are long in the tooth, maybe there is an argument for them old enough, but also newer people, not wanting to put themselves in a position where they can be vulnerable.'*
>
> CLD1

> *'I think that's right, I think you can see the embers of people's passion for the social work they were doing and the kind of skeleton of that, that's been left worn down by feeling that they are just battling constantly to try and keep up with what they are doing and become cynical about some of these structures that are around. I think it can erode people's sense that I have got a part in this and yet there are other people who manage to hang on to it. You know who say, I'm absolutely clear why I am in social work and what I'm trying to achieve and what we're trying to achieve and really want to be part of taking it forward.'* SW1

5.6.1 Summing up

There was evidence that constantly changing environments do have an impact on creativity, innovation and continuous improvement although this was not always seen as negative. There was strong support for greater opportunities to be creative, innovative and to constantly enhance practice born particularly out of a sense of social justice – wanting to 'make a difference'. Many participants recognised the constant nature of turbulence and appeared to have developed strategies to survive and thrive. There were calls for greater communication about how to work collectively within and across organisations to achieve effective outcomes with a willingness to offer support. There was recognition that, not only

organisational cultures but also organisational structures and outside drivers such as governments and regulatory bodies, can and do stifle opportunities to be creative. A strong message made both implicitly and explicitly suggested early career professionals be afforded opportunities to lead as a mechanism to strengthen confidence, skill and professional development.

5.7 Theme 1: The ability to influence appears to be significant to leaders and professionals

Within the narratives, participants variously described themselves as both leaders and professionals. As has been reported, at times the conceptualisation of leadership was hierarchical and at other times, through the stories, evidence suggested that distributed leadership had been experienced throughout individuals' careers. Within the Leadership and Professionalism Connections Matrix (Table 2) it was very significant how frequently 'influence' was used as a word as well as a concept when participants' were discussing leadership. Whilst in many aspects there was evidence of strong links between both leadership and professionalism, the word 'influence' and indeed the concept was conspicuous by its absence when discussing professionalism. Other aspects of leadership such as 'adopting an ethical approach', 'having credibility' and the ability to 'consult and involve others' were considered, not only important for leaders, but equally so for professionals. Whilst some categories within the matrix differed in the degree to which participants' described their importance, both to leadership and professionalism, nevertheless within the analysis there were fifteen out of twenty, points of similarity. This indicates that 'influence' was considered a strong concept connected explicitly to ideas about leadership. In fact, for some it was described as meaning leadership,

> *'...and thinking about leadership and for me leadership isn't really about the ability to lead it is the ability to influence. I actually feel that I have more influence where I have had roles where I have had more influence, that's when I have felt I have achieved more.'*
>
> POL2

Whilst saying this, the following participant's story provided rich insight into the complexity and skilfulness of using 'influence' in the workplace. Whilst not using the word specifically, she described within her story how she worked with agencies and communities to achieve common goals. Her story was underpinned by her strong values and wider sense of social justice, alongside her commitment to 'make a difference', despite the many obstacles she and the groups with whom she worked, encountered. Her story is illustrative of many similar views within the narratives. I have tried to honour the essence of her story below, without presenting it in its entirety which would not be appropriate within this report due to confidentiality. She eloquently raises the point that 'influence' can be used positively or negatively to, for instance, 'manipulate' or be 'subversive', as well as bring about collaborative change. She described herself as a professional, with a strong sense of professional identity, so despite the word not being included as a category within the Leadership and Professional Connections Matrix (Table 2), I suggest it could have a place implicitly in relation to professionalism as well as leadership.

> *'...when you have got a new organisation you have to get people involved and that means going out there, building relationships, talking to people, finding out what they want and need, supporting people to see a health organisation is relevant to them....again I think for me leadership is probably about walking a line between being a resource for people, being somebody they feel can support them in whatever way and the other side of it is having that clarity of what you are trying to do and what involvement means and being upfront with people ...you have to get people involved therefore and you have to be honest with folk about what that means. They are accountable for the organisation but you don't want to scare people away so there is a real kind of, it's a real nuanced conversation that you have to have with folk...they have to develop enough trust in you as a person and as a leader to believe that they can get involved and you will not let them down and you will support them ....but at some point you have an accountability and a role that is a*

professional role and you can't, you shouldn't disguise, you shouldn't have to disguise that. I think you can have a meaningful relationship with local people and be a professional and be a leader....
....you are hearing all these different agendas and you know what you want to do and you are thinking, I am going to have to try and guide this process so we end up on paper with something that honours the (community's) experience but has all these organisations on board....it doesn't matter whether you are working with the community or whether you are working with Chief Execs, everybody has their agenda and to have the ability, or be able to develop the ability to understand all that....
...some of the other qualities I suppose I used were being open to what people are saying and listening to folk. Some of this though sounds subversive because at the end of the day I was writing the bid. So you can note down... people like to feel at every level, again, that they are involved and their contributions are valuable and it is... but you can't always take on board everything that everybody says. So the discussion was such that you cannot dismiss what people are saying necessarily. If somebody is going completely down the wrong route then I think it is good to draw people back through the kind of... give an example or reminding people about the approach we are trying to take. I guess what I am saying is the skills and qualities were around the kind of interpersonal ones maybe and having mentors around the table as well because I wasn't on my own I think that there were people who really got this and understanding when sometimes less is more, in terms of what you say and once everybody has had a chance to air their views, a decision has to be made and it is at that point often that I have got a skill I think... trying to summarise what the views that have gone on and to apply those to the task in hand and then to take that away and put something down on paper that reflects a kind of consensual process..... I learnt that you can't always do jobs that you love and you can't always do tasks that you see as relevant. I learnt a bit, a lot, about tactics and how to play things. That doesn't come naturally to me, I am a bit of an open book but you can't always be like that, you can't always say what you think, you can manipulate a situation actually to get what you want and sometimes you have to go around the houses and sometimes you have to except that you have lost the battle but not the war.'

CLD2

The ability to 'influence' was generally described positively as a mechanism to bring about a change or to achieve an outcome. It was always used in the context of a 'leader' working with another or others and there was a wide spread of examples about this in relation to both hierarchical and dispersed leadership opportunities. Participants approached the term 'influence' from a range of perspectives, variously describing the 'skills' required to influence; the 'importance' of being able

to influence and the potential 'impact' of influencing. Some of these examples are illustrated in the extract above, although other people offered the following, firstly in relation to 'skills' and secondly 'impact'. The impact in question was described as positive because it was deemed to be based on very sound clinical judgements although it is easy to conject how this might not be the case,

> '*to gain influence over people you have to have a lot of positive traits and I think it is the consequence of being able to have respect for your kind of 'underlings' isn't the right word but it's for those within your kind of sphere of responsibility, for those people you are working with, for your peers for your colleagues. Although I have a number of people within my own department I am also one of many principle teachers within my school and I have got to be able to discuss things with my peers in such a way that there is real respect in what I am saying and again it is listening to them, again it is taking on ideas.'*
>
> EDU2

> '...*but she kind of lead the team and she was clever enough that she didn't make it look too obvious so we would always have discussions but she was always dead clever and she could kind of manipulate it to get what she wanted really and everybody knew she was doing that but everybody kind of knew that you know clinically she was very sound and clinically her judgements were usually...'*
>
> NUR2

The examples above, drawn from both hierarchical and distributed leadership perspectives, specifically identify skills required to influence. As noted within a previous example, there were other examples within the narratives that suggested, not only leaders but also professionals had an ability to influence although, in stark contrast to leadership narratives, it was rarely explicitly stated. This again is contrary to the evidence suggested within the Leadership and Professional Connections Matrix (Table 2) which identified explicit references to influence being attributable to effective leader only.

Many stories highlighted how modelling good practice was inherent in the role of leaders as well as professionals. In fact, it was noted that

professionals could 'lead' using this skill which was akin to influencing others' behaviour. Positive role modelling has been identified as an inhibitor of deviant work-based behaviour which can promote empowerment within organisations (Appelbaum et al, 2007). Role modelling was articulated by some from the perspective of them being role models and by others as people being role models to them. This continuous cycle of influencing learning and professional practice was a key feature throughout the narratives,

'So working as the staff officer to the Chief Constable I've really enjoyed 1) because I learned so much because I am watching people in these higher ranks with greater responsibility and looking at things nationally, so I started to understand how they influenced and how they go about influencing things but also got to understand the influence I could have.'

POL2

'I am going to be boring again and come back to that role modelling bit but you don't have to actually, consciously say right, I'm going to lead this today or whatever, do you know what I mean. Just by showing people how you could manage something in a professional manner thereby hopefully you are promoting leadership and helping them see how it's done or how it should be done. It's about promoting good practice isn't it?'

SW2

'So again what we did was, I again, there was three of us, I was the leader, brought in the other three but I suppose again a lot of it I find is about you listen to the other people, the teams that I'm involved in are seldom teams of people who lack skills or experience or they bring it differently, so it is about listening and I suppose my strategy is just by force of discussion to get it to the direction that I want to get it to. So rather than I would think by dictat or by resting on authority, it's by pushing it along by the evidence.'

EP2

The importance of having opportunities to influence was identified throughout the narratives and ranked highly. It was explicitly identified in relation to leadership and more implicitly in relation to professionalism. It was sometimes linked to the concept of power. For example, if you had the ability to influence someone or something, then you had a degree of power. If you did not, this could lead to a sense of dis-empowerment,

> '*At that point I actually felt less empowered as a leader that I had ever been because I didn't feel I had any influence on day to day work I didn't*

> *have a team about me and I was just asking people to do certain tasks in order for a project and all I was really doing was scoping a project it wasn't even that I was running a project. So if I was to pin point a time where I was least happy in the organisation that was probably it and I think that was why because I felt out of my comfort zone and not really getting what I wanted out of things.'* POL2

And when this participant discussed another role he had been in as a leader, he was able to describe a more empowered position,

> '*So I found I actually had way more influence and for me when I was thinking about it the other day in terms that knowing you were coming and thinking about leadership and for me leadership isn't really about the ability to lead it is the ability to influence. I actually feel that I have more influence where I have had roles where I have had more influence, that's when I have felt I have achieved more.'* POL2

5.7.1 Summing Up

There was explicit evidence that the ability to influence is significant to effective leadership. There was additional evidence that the ability to influence is significant to effective professionalism although this was more implicitly stated within the data. In relation to being an effective professional, participant narratives suggested role modelling was a strong influencing factor; both being a role model and observing others' role modelling. This was seen, as part of professional practice, as a method to support the learning of others where the role model could strongly influence others' understanding and behaviour. The 'power' to influence was noted as important both within leadership and professional roles. It was suggested that without the ability to influence, gained through having responsibility and accountability within an organisation, people can feel dis-empowered. This, as has been identified earlier, can lead to de-motivation and a lack of engagement.

5.8 Theme 2: that values and a sense of social justice appear to be significant to leadership and professional development

This was one of the most significant findings within this study. There was overwhelming evidence, drawn from across the narratives, indicating strongly that values and a sense of social justice are significant to leadership and professional development.

Values and a sense of social justice influenced why participants entered the profession; why they remained in the profession and why they remained, despite obstacles described for example, as risk-averse environments and de-motivating cultures.

Some participants were motivated to enter their profession based on convictions about social justice at a political or societal level, whilst other stories described equally compelling convictions based on more personal experiences. Many participants cited family influences from early childhood that had helped to shape their values and commitment to fairness, justice and equality,

> *'It is a bit blurred but the whole notion about Social Justice and that sort of stuff and some of the dafter ideas of my youth. Actually I am not describing it well. I am being a bit coded so you grow up and there is the Miners strike and you think what is happening to the world and you engage in all sort of different things....It seemed to be a course that was built on everything that interested me and motivated me, my beliefs, my kind of values and principles, it really seemed to, you know, pin on all the things that inspired me and I felt were important'*
>
> CLD1

> *'...it's about a strong ethical code and a strong sense of doing what is right for children and young people'*
>
> EP1

> *'I think it goes back to 'I give a toss'*
>
> NUR2

> *'So I genuinely joined to try and make society better for everybody'*
>
> POL1

'I mean I came through where people were criticising existing structures that existed so I think what happened was that you got a radical influx of younger psychologists into a profession which historically had been kind of about sorting and allocating children into, in those days, diagnosed as handicapped and allocated to schools and so you got a group of us coming in ,of which I am probably at the younger end of, who wanted to change this and change the way the profession operated and to use what we saw, as kind of real knowledge of modern psychology, to make a difference. Probably a lot of us had been involved in relatively radical politics at university and things like that and so you wanted to bring about a change.'

EP2

'I honestly do believe, without wanting to sound too Freudian about it. I think it is your historical upbringing and I think it is who you are as a person. It is the understanding of right and wrong which comes right from the beginning.....yes it is very much value based. Professionalism as a feeling is very much value based isn't it. It has to be.'

EDU1

Working in a human service context was a significant factor within these findings. All participants had been qualified for over ten years, and often longer, and remained largely within human services so their collective experience and commitment was vast. The same drivers that had motivated many participants' entry into the helping professions, based often on utilitarian principles, spurred them on. There was clear evidence that, despite having worked in the sector for many years, people still appeared to have a passion for the work,

'It certainly seemed to me to offer me the opportunity to do something that was built on beliefs and not very many careers I think provide you with that opportunity. And that has just followed me through. I mean I do not know how you can do CLD if you don't have that sense of social justice'

CLD2

'I think a lot of it (confidence) was having some of the things that I was doing well recognised by other people. Coming from recognition that's working well, that kind of was partly being able to work with some of the people and their families in particular, just being able to, quite clearly, make a difference...'

SW1

'I will still be there, my conscious wouldn't let me just draw a line under something completely without making sure that we were recognising that

> *we hadn't finished a job and advocating for resources to be able to finish that job even if I am only the resource that is there. You know things can be done.'*
>
> CLD2

One participant described his ongoing difficulty of working in large organisations, yet was able to draw learning from what he describes as 'destructive sort of processes', identifying his experiences as a younger worker as 'an interesting grounding' for his later practice. This indicates an ability to develop professionally, despite negative environments, if there is a sound value base and driving sense of social justice,

> *'...it's very interesting, as a social worker having seen both sides at that stage, it's very interesting seeing all the really positive stuff and the commitment that people bring to it and their absolute kind of passion about what they are doing but also the really destructive sort of processes that can go on between professional groups and staff members where personal relationships or the hierarchy and the power between people can play a really big part and so I suppose, and again when you are caught in the middle of it as a pretty young inexperienced worker, it's a kind of rollercoaster at the time but actually in terms of how organisations work it was quite an interesting grounding actually.'*
>
> SW1

Whilst social justice was seen to be a strong driver for participants entering the caring professions within human services, it was less overtly described as such for people being leaders. Ethical leadership, however, was identified as important by participants across the narratives, being a category within the Leadership and Professional Connections Matrix (Table 2) that was very strongly rated for both effective professionalism and leadership. This was one area where the concepts of leadership and professionalism became muddy within participant stories with frequent references starting with one concept and ending with another. The definition of taking an ethical approach is broad and the types of words used with the narratives included for example, valuing and involving people; respectful; fair; honest; trustworthy; genuine; authentic; being there and consistent. I have included a number of quotes in respect of

this particular issue to illustrate a range of diverse participant views when describing the importance of values, ethics and social justice to effective leadership. I have used bold type to illustrate key value statements used specifically by participants to make their point.

> *'You have to make sure you are **involving people meaningfully**. So that was kind of, I suppose it felt like, I don't know if I would have defined it as leadership at the time but I guess on reflection that what it was.'*
>
> CLD2

> *'I actually think the way you interact, well I certainly believe that the way I interact as a leader has actually come from my experiences from childhood, bizarrely. Because my situation as a child was such that I had to be incredibly conscious of what I was doing and how other people were feeling in order to ensure that everything was fine. **That real attunement to how other people feel**, is something that has guided me considerably through my career'*
>
> EDU1

> *'I think (leading is) being able **to respect whoever you work with** whether or not they are in your team and you do that by modelling.'*
>
> EP1

> *'..... So for me the best leaders I have seen are people who, when I'm following somebody, is somebody who knows the right style to use and when to use it and who's fairly consistent in that set of circumstances, you don't have well you've got to get them on the right day or the right time of the day or whatever**. Somebody has a reasonable level of consistency and above all has the right values.** My personal values, I mean everybody's values are different but for me it's about **fairness.** One thing that is really strong for me is that I never, ever show favouritism amongst my staff.'*
>
> POL1

> *'it's very easy to be glib about the importance of good leadership in driving that stuff forward but **there is also something about good and ethical and honest leadership in not undermining what people are there to do and want to do and the commitment that they have got to do it**.....'*
>
> SW1

Finally in relation to this question, there was clear evidence of values driving practice throughout the narratives. There was a clear focus on both professionals and leaders having deep concerns about standards,

and the quality of not only their own, but also others' practice. I have included one example which illustrates this point well.

> *'I think one of the things that often happens, is asking, 'would this be good enough for me, would this be good enough for one of my family?' Would it be good enough, if it is not, and it doesn't mean it's not about at a content level or enough money but more a general sense of wellbeing for rights, respect and dignity.'*
>
> EP1

5.8.1 Summing Up

There is overwhelming, explicit evidence to suggest that values and a broader sense of social justice are significant to professional development. Within this human service context, and as might be expected, participants identified strongly with a broad social justice agenda which had drawn them into their profession and kept them there. There is less explicit evidence to suggest 'social justice' as a broad term, is seen as significant to leadership development. However, there is an abundance of evidence from the data to suggest that both leadership and professionalism should be driven from an ethical perspective. For example, that leaders and professionals should show respect, provide confidentiality and be non discriminatory. Such a finding in relation to leadership suggests a conceptualisation that favours 'new, new era' approaches which include distributed models of leadership (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2005). New, new era models of leadership suggest a more collaborative approach to leadership, which favour greater engagement with people, and embrace such notions as servant-leader (Greenleaf, 1996). This resonates well with other findings discussed above about ethics, values and social justice being strong drivers within human service contexts.

Chapter 6 - Discussion of findings and emergent thinking

6.1 Interconnected Concepts

Whilst having provided some analysis throughout the findings, I now provide a more in depth analysis which I present using three key themes. These themes, I suggest, have arisen from the constellation of ideas that have emerged from the narratives. I further offer some of my own observations and recommendations, as well as providing evidence to support the originality and significance of the study.

The three themes are inter-connected and sit under the headings, 'concepts', 'people' and 'environment'. I will highlight the importance of the connected nature of all three in relation to how leadership and professionalism might both be understood, and further developed in the future, within human service environments.

Diagram 1: Interconnected Nature of Professional Environments

6.1.1 Concepts

As part of this study I have sought to discover whether there are connections between conceptualisations of leadership and professionalism. Through engagement with the literature, as well as the data, it is clear there are various conceptualisations of both. Such concepts change dependent on time, context and setting, being influenced by societal, political and environmental agendas (Osgood, 2006; Monrouxe et al, 2011; Boateng, 2012). It was no surprise therefore to note that the context within which this study took place, human services, had a bearing on how such concepts were articulated. Within the data, participants made strong links between the attributes, skills, behaviours and values inherent in being a professional with those of being a leader as seen within the Leadership and Professional Connections Matrix (Table 2). In fact they identified fifteen out of twenty of these as being the same to some degree.

Many of the skills and qualities described, such as having 'emotional intelligence', being 'passionate and enthusiastic', meaningfully 'consulting with people', as well as 'taking an ethical approach' are conducive with professionals working within human services. Participants knowingly and unknowingly referred to professionalism and leadership interchangeably, indicating a strong inter-connectedness between the two concepts. This mirrored some of my own experience when searching the literature. From evidence within the data, the muddying of these two concepts seems to emanate from how participants articulate, not only their understanding about, but also their experience of, these concepts. I suggest these similarities or this 'muddiness' is most obviously aligned to conceptualisations of leadership that include distributed models (Camburn et al, 2003), engagement leadership (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe,

2011) and servant-leadership (Greenleaf, 1996) rather than more formal hierarchical models. The former embrace human service values, principles and practice more closely than the latter hierarchical models which focus more on individual traits, charisma and definable rather than 'wicked' problems (Grint, 2008).

Participants talked extensively about their professional identity being underpinned by a strong sense of social justice and their desire to 'make a difference' within society. They identified strongly with conceptualisations of professionalism, not only being about the general conduct, aim and qualities that characterise or mark a profession or professional person but these specifically having to be ethically driven.

It is not surprising then, that with ethics and a strong alignment to social justice at the core of participants' professional practice, they would attribute these qualities to their own leadership opportunities. Within the study, I sought to establish whether participants had been provided with or sought out opportunities to lead within their career. Evidence shows that many people had experienced both, with strong suggestions that these had been positive, although at times, challenging experiences. These opportunities appear to have strengthened participants' sense of professional identity by increasing their confidence, skills, pride and competence both in relation to their own abilities, as well as their commitment to their wider profession. Being afforded responsibility was for some seen as an endorsement of their worth. Distributed leadership in this way was seen as an extension of professional practice which would therefore be naturally underpinned by the same ethical approach as all other practice. Although many people did not initially label these opportunities as 'leadership', many had subsequently done so when reflecting back on their careers, at times as part of this study.

Because participants' had a strong drive to 'make a difference', they described how they continually sought to enhance their practice, raise standards and support others to do the same. Becoming engaged in leadership activities 'at all levels' was frequently seen as part of the role of being a professional through the enhancement of practice.

From the evidence provided by participants, it is clear that human service environments can be conducive to promoting high quality professional practice, alongside the promotion of models of leadership of a distributed nature. Certainly, the data suggests there is willingness on the part of staff to engage in situations that provide them with greater responsibility, accountability and opportunities to lead (at all levels). Evidence related to question five suggests that more opportunities to lead earlier on in people's careers, could instil greater confidence, skill and promote professional development.

I suggest such leadership potential within human services is as yet untapped as organisations continue to operate in outdated models which favour hierarchical leadership approaches. A 'nannying' approach is frequently adopted within many risk-averse human service organisations that scrutinise professional practice so closely that individual practitioners are scared to make decisions. There is a growing consensus that the balance between bureaucracy and discretion is wrong and stifling professionalism (Doel, 2012; UK Government, 2011). Doel suggests 'for some social workers the experience is less that of professional judgement and more civil servant administering a set of procedures' (2012:106). Also, due to public lack of confidence in public services in Scotland, it has been suggested that leaders across these services are having a crisis in their own confidence as (hierarchical) leaders (ESRC, 2009). Harnessing the leadership energy of willing and capable professionals throughout these organisations could counter such low levels of confidence, as well as

raise overall confidence and drive up standards (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2006).

6.1.2 Environment

However, such movement will require changed understanding about, and attitudes to, conceptions of both professionalism and leadership within organisational environments to enable change. As has been identified within the literature review, many organisations are currently attempting to redefine their purpose and approach to become more aligned to twenty first century demands, although this is a bit like a tanker turning in deep water, and could take a long time (ESRC, 2009). Whilst it has been seen within human services that drivers to 'serve', 'make a difference' and 'improve quality' appear to predominate at ground level, such terms, often drawn from the private sector, such as 'efficiency savings', 'best value', and 'economic growth' are increasingly used by governments to move the sector forward (Scottish Government, 2011; Scottish Government, 2013). As these terms become adopted by organisations in response to government demands, it has led to greater managerialism and a move away from more ethical 'human' service approaches, favoured by many professional employees. For example, due to fear of litigation and blame, some organisations have increasingly become more risk averse with risk management tools, promoted to manage, if not eliminate risk, doing little to diminish this fear (Huber and Rothstein, 2013).

Over the last twenty five years there has been a steady increase in the influence of management throughout the public sector which has been described as eroding individual autonomy and sometimes termed a culture of managerialism (Cribb, 2001; Scottish Executive, 2006). Lawler (2005) highlights how this can clearly be seen, for example, through the introduction of care management in social work which he argues, moved

social workers' roles from those concerned with relationship building to far less care driven bureaucratic roles.

Additionally, managerial creep has been identified as being driven from the outside through, for example, forced changes in public policy by the state, which have supported managerial models in the hope organisations will become more efficient (Clarke and Newman, 1997). This erosion of individual power towards more centralised control and a greater managerial approach in professional groups such as teaching, social work and health, has led to high levels of dissatisfaction which have resulted in increased absenteeism (Di Franks, 2008). Other studies echo Di Frank's findings culminating in a body of literature very consistent in its messages regarding disjuncture where values and behaviour are in conflict (Jones, 2001; O'Donnell et al, 2008, Calderwood et al, 2009; Ruch, 2011). The environment within which people operate at work is highly influential to the way people feel and therefore behave.

Organisational cultures were identified throughout the narratives, as potential barriers, often being both described and experienced as minimising opportunities to lead at all levels. As a barrier, they were also attributed with having the potential to make people feel less empowered and less engaged with professional endeavour. These missed opportunities were seen by participants to be more prevalent in today's greater risk averse, managerial cultures and were described as having the effect of stifling innovation, creativity and motivation. Positive cultures were described as having the opposite effect.

Evidence related to questions four and five highlights the importance participants' placed on how cultures they had experienced throughout their careers had helped or hindered their ability to act as a professional. In cultures where participants were able to take responsibility and be

accountable, often reframed on reflection within a distributed leadership paradigm, they reported feelings of pride, increased confidence and increased opportunities to develop as professionals. This appears to have strengthened, not only their individual sense of professional identity, but also a stronger commitment to their profession (and current organisation).

Schein (2010) identifies a four level conceptual framework which I find helpful in defining what culture means in its broadest sense. Within this study I am referring to organisational cultures within the 'public sector' or human services. This might also at times be applied to government and non-profit organisations but here I am not discussing private or 'corporate' cultures. Nor am I discussing other cultural levels in any depth, although I do recognise all levels have a bearing on one another.

Level 1 - Macro cultures – nations, ethnic and religious groups, occupations that exist globally
Level 2 - **Organisational Cultures** – private, **public**, non-profit, government organisations
Level 3 - Sub-cultures – occupational groups within organisations
Level 4 - Micro-cultures – Microsystems within or outside organisations

A culture at any level is described as '...a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems' (Schein, 2010:18). Essentially cultures become embedded over time with the potential to entrench poor practice or encourage development. Cultures can be difficult but not impossible to change. Although cultures effect everyone within the organisation, frequently they are attributed as

being led from 'the top' from a hierarchical leadership position and have been categorised, dependent on the approach of the leader being, 'pathological', 'bureaucratic' or 'generative' (Westrum, 2004). A generative approach, which has a concentration on the core mission rather than on personal position or power, should sit well within public sector contexts to achieve the positive outcomes described above. Such an approach would potentially provide the space within which individuals, groups and organisations could flourish. Of course human service environments, alongside those within the private sector, can attract a range of approaches.

Positive cultures, as described within the data were less managerial, drawing on models that favour collaborative engagement across organisations and this was supported in the literature (Hamel, 2009; Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2011). Such models ensure mechanisms are in place to promote value based leadership that allow space to reflect on learning, prototype and learn from mistakes, be creative, innovate and maximise individual and collective strengths. Evidence from this study suggests strongly that these are the very aims, not only of leaders, but also of effective professionals within a human service context.

Such mechanisms align well with what Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2005) have described as 'new, new, paradigm' models of leadership. This type of leadership goes beyond other transformational 'new paradigm' models and is based to some extent on Greenleaf's 'servant-leadership' as mentioned earlier (Greenleaf, 1996). He argues that leadership should spring from natural feelings of wanting to serve rather than individuals becoming leaders first. He suggests that if people have humility and a strong commitment to serve others, they are the leaders

that will support real change due to their commitment to others, rather than a focus on self gain or profit and argues,

> *'In a time of crisis, like the leadership crisis we are now in, if too many builders (leaders) are completely absorbed with dissecting the wrong and striving for instant perfection, then the movement so many of us want to see will be set back. The danger, perhaps, is to hear the analyst too much and the artist too little'*
>
> (Greenleaf 2008:5)

Within the stories told within this study, many 'artists' described their desire for change, not based on short-term leadership or management 'speak' such as 'best value' and 'efficiency savings', but based on solid ethical principles drawn from their understanding of the core values of their professional practice. Participants continually made reference to upholding these principles, not only when working with clients, service users and patients, but also with colleagues and friends both inside and out-with their workplace. Additionally, this 'artistry' was seen as requiring more space, opportunity and permission to be creative than many current human service environments allow.

Across human services there were examples within the narratives of a sense of service first with a desire to 'lead' emanating from this. Participants provided strong evidence of this sense of service when they spoke about wanting to 'make a difference' and their work being a 'lifestyle' rather than 'just a job'. There were numerous examples of participants' 'serving' others through continuous improvement, achieving high standards and in the manner in which they approached their work, showing respect and offering dignity to others.

I argue that this ethical approach is frequently the default position of people across human services and therefore one of the reasons they see such a strong connection between leadership and professionalism.

Inherent in their professional identity is a commitment to continuous improvement which manifests itself in leading initiatives that support others with an aim to achieve this end. Within the narratives, these opportunities to take on leadership roles throughout their careers were seen either to be provided, if organisations had enabling cultures, or individually identified, if people had the confidence to do so.

I suggest within human services the time is right to re-conceptualise professionalism to recognise professionals' inherent desires to 'serve' and therefore 'lead' their professions forward collaboratively. Human service professionals appear to recognise and take pride in their ability to 'make a difference' in society and set high standards of service. For this they should be rewarded through the ongoing development of cultures within organisations that support these aspirations. This would require a move away from current managerial approaches, harnessing greater energy through collaborative engagement across the whole workforce. Problem solving should be a shared activity rather than led from the top; creative approaches should be utilised rather than employing the same, safe practices and innovation should be the new watchword. Whilst cultures can be led from 'the top', they are equally influenced and shaped by the group. The data from this study suggests there is a commitment, appetite and ability within public sector environments to support such a change.

6.1.3 People

And people, as professionals and leaders at all levels across organisations, have to be at the heart of bringing about such significant change. From participant narratives, there was explicit evidence to suggest that the ability to influence is significant to effective leadership and there was additional, more implicit, evidence to suggest that the ability to influence

is significant to effective professionalism. I have also presented above a re-conceptualisation of professionalism that places leadership models at the heart of ethically sound professional practice. If this re-conceptualisation were realised and professionals have greater opportunity to be leaders (at all levels within an organisation), I suggest they could have greater opportunity to influence change. Messages from the data suggested that without the ability to influence, gained through having responsibility and being accountable within an organisation, people can feel dis-empowered, de-motivated and less engaged. Through their stories, participants identified the importance of being effective professionals, providing quality services as well as leading their profession forward. This was evidenced through examples which illustrated how they led their own and others' learning; promoted new initiatives to managers; led their own caseloads; led projects; ran clubs and introduced innovative ideas. Such engagement, although not always initially labelled as distributed leadership opportunities, would sit within such a conceptual framework.

Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2011) identify 'engagement' of staff as paramount, not only to achieve altruistic outcomes, but because their research suggests it improves productivity. It adopts a reciprocal follower-leader relationship which is far more of an equal relationship than those found within hierarchical leadership models. This concept of leadership focuses on shared perspectives and recognises, in a distributed manner, that leadership does not require to be the sole preserve of those occupying formal leadership roles. Leadership is experienced as a social process.

At this time, I believe there is a unique opportunity to harness the latent power within the professional workforce. The data suggests such an approach would be 'pushing at an open door'. The power to influence

could be unleashed by developing organisational cultures, as described earlier, that support creativity, innovation and professional development. Additionally, cultures need to provide opportunities where staff feel engaged and can make a contribution where they feel they have real power 'to make a difference'. Such moves simply need to build on the existing altruism, commitment and values of staff within the workforce. This approach would demand cultures that challenge future managerialism, become less risk-averse and recognise that by empowering professionals, there is greater synergy, engagement and productivity. It would require all levels within an organisation to work collaboratively to re-shape cultures. For Engagement Leadership to gain ground within organisations, Alban -Metcalfe and Alimo-Metcalfe (2011) suggest senior management has to get on board and drive such collaborative initiatives.

Whilst findings from this study cannot, and should not, be generalised across all human service professionals, there are key messages that could form the basis of further exploration. From this analysis, I suggest current hierarchical leaders across human services could increase organisational leadership capacity, initially through greater dialogue with employees about conceptions of professionalism and leadership. To harness leadership energy within the workforce, leaders first need to understand the potential. Greater understanding about employee motivations to 'serve', as well as a desire to drive up standards could help to shape future leadership strategies. Greater knowledge about models of distributed leadership and how these are currently utilised within organisations would provide new learning. Entering into such dialogue with employees could provide the 'engagement' platform upon which culture change could develop. Certainly, the data would suggest a need within human services to more fully understand leadership models; challenge inhibiting managerial cultures and question how professional

identity develops. As a first step, increased communication by current leaders with employees, with an aim to seek greater understanding about their experience of being both leaders and professionals, would be a positive start. Further stories of this nature could build on the findings of this study to either support these or explore new themes upon which professionalism could be strengthened and leadership capacity developed.

6.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

I conclude by making several recommendations, based on key points drawn both from the data and related literature, and discussed in more detail above. I note that the sample within this study required participants to be over ten years qualified, with many having longer service. Whilst these findings reflect the experience of the sample, I am aware this could differ with other groups, particularly taking into account age and experience. A further study in the future would be of interest drawing from a sample of early career human service professionals to explore whether similar issues are raised. I would be particularly interested to see whether similar values underpin practice at this stage and whether social justice is identified as a motivating factor to enter and remain within practice. Should this be the case, I suggest there could be similar findings.

These recommendations support the view that, whilst there is a surfeit of leadership initiatives across human services, leadership capacity can only truly be developed through cultures that are enabling and support distributed leadership models. These require genuine engagement with staff through ongoing dialogue. I suggest storytelling as a positive mechanism to unlock latent leadership capacity and a greater understanding about professionalism. This could allow other professionals, like those within this study, to reflect on their journeys to

becoming professionals, with the potential to identify leadership opportunities. Such dialogue would place a greater emphasis on, and understanding about the concepts of both leadership and professionalism and I argue, their reciprocal relationship. Finally, cultures that support professionals to challenge risk averse, managerial environments could become the catalysts that unleash latent energy towards a new realisation of **'professional as leader'.** I recommend,

A Re-conceptualisation of Professionalism

This recognises that across human services there appears to be a desire amongst professionals to 'make a difference'. A re-conceptualisation of professionalism would incorporate leadership as an element within individual and collective identities of themselves as professionals. Professionals could, through a distributed model, develop leadership abilities within themselves and build capacity across and through organisations as they grow and develop both as professionals and leaders.

Such a re-conceptualisation has the potential to harness existing latent energy within the workforce to develop skills as well as improve practice.

Cultural change

Cultures within human service organisations need to change with a greater emphasis on a distributed leadership model being embedded within the professional role. Cultures need to develop towards being more supportive of 'professional leaders' throughout organisations with a focus on the encouragement of innovation, creativity and enhancement.

New human service cultures need to challenge existing managerialism and risk-averse organisational behaviours as well as external bodies that drive 'private sector' informed practices. A first step towards this would be organisations entering into dialogue with staff about what they

understand about professionalism and leadership and how these concepts can more readily be utilised collectively. Allowing space for storytelling within the workplace could be a good place to start.

Positional Leaders

To achieve the above, hierarchical leaders need to drive change collaboratively through genuine engagement with people to maximise the potential of leadership capacity across the workforce – which I suggest, would be like 'pushing at an open door'

New Leadership Paradigms

A re-conceptualisation of professionalism that incorporates new paradigms of leadership for example, shared, collaborative, distributed, engagement and servant leadership paradigms, should be explicitly addressed within professional qualifying programmes as well as through continuous professional learning opportunities

Challenge and critique of these different models should be encouraged to promote greater potential for effective used of approaches dependent on context.

Organisational Behaviour and Development

Organisational behaviour and development should be considered as learning topics within professional qualifying programmes, as well as through continuous professional learning opportunities, to enable greater understanding about culture and the potential to influence within the workplace

6.3 Potential Impact on stakeholders

So what might this mean for the range of stakeholders that have an investment in leadership development across the human services sector? I pose the findings from this study can usefully inform the work of a range of stakeholders with the potential to impact on both their understanding and experience of professionals and leaders. I hope they also have the potential to inform leadership development. I now suggest how this might manifest itself from a range of different stakeholder perspectives.

6.3.1 Formal leaders in organisations

Formal leaders in organisations have positions entrusted in their role and job description with the power to influence how leadership might be understood and experienced throughout the organisation. The Christie Report (Public Service Commission, 2011) states that public sector leaders within Scotland should endeavour to create 'can-do' cultures within the workforce which enables a strengthened public 'ethos', based on enabling, empowering and improving the lives of people and communities. This report suggests staff 'place a high premium on being valued for what they do and trusted and empowered to do a good job' (Public Service Commission, 2011:14). Formal or positional leaders who endeavour to create such cultures within the public sector positively engage staff, seeking to share power, often involving distributed models of leadership. However, it has been noted that one of the greatest challenges for the public sector in Scotland in the next five years will be how to effectively engagement employees (Investors in People 2010).

I suggest the notion of re-conceptualising professionalism to incorporate leadership, which is a key finding from this study, could act as a catalyst to open up dialogue between leaders and employees. This would provide

an opportunity, not only to listen to people's opinions and ideas, but also begin to engage with new concepts of leadership. Distributed leadership is inherent within this new conceptualisation, as is a reframing of professionalism. A greater concentration on core aspects of being an effective professional or leader, rather than a continuous focus on 'best value' and management systems, could inspire people to engage in a dialogue. If employees place a high premium on being trusted to do a good job, I suggest leaders need to let go and trust them do it.

Listening is at the heart of engagement. From such a beginning, leaders could utilise a range of other strategies to further involve staff with an overall aim to support the development of less 'top down', managerial approaches. These could include for example, increased delegation; creative ways to obtain employee views and ideas; practitioner forums which enable cross fertilisation of ideas; critical feedback loops within a 'no blame' environment; development of a learning organisation where prototyping, debriefing and continuous learning are commonplace; adopting coaching approaches which support individual critical thinking and problem solving and permission to innovate with space to promote creative new ways of working.

Leaders at the top of human service organisations have the power to rethink strategies to make changes which positively impact on cultures. This can mean relinquishing their own sense of power yet sharing power and responsibility with others. New approaches within human services suggest the future will require, not only greater engagement with and empowerment of staff, but also wider communities. Again, the Christie report places a high premium on the importance of community empowerment, citizens' rights and innovative ways of working to reform Scottish public services (Public Service Commission, 2011). I suggest that to achieve this, formal leaders within organisations are ideally placed

to support the empowerment of staff to become autonomous professionals and leaders who can drive such community partnership agendas forward.

6.3.2 Practitioners

Whilst hierarchical leaders have a role in driving cultural change, they are not solely responsible for the development of cultures within organisations. A culture does not exist in a vacuum but is made up of people whose rituals, climate, values and behaviours tie together into a coherent whole. *'Organisational cultures, like other cultures, develop as groups of people struggle to make sense of their worlds'* (Trice and Beyer 1993:4).

Practitioners both influence and are influenced by culture. As identified by participants in the study, organisational cultures can be powerful inhibitors of shared knowledge. By not listening to practitioners at all levels and recognising the collective wisdom of the workforce, huge potential will be lost. Allowing practitioner voices to be heard is crucial for organisations to thrive and those that ignore these 'assets', do so at their peril. For example, this quote illustrates the potential loss of many years of knowledge and experience simply by not recognising the worth of all employees, at whatever level.

> *'When I first joined the organisation, hugely status conscious you were not allowed to have an idea unless you'd been in for x numbers of years or you had a particular rank or whatever.'*
>
> *POL1*

Some participants within the study however, became leaders (at all levels) despite inhibiting cultures and against the odds. This would suggest that practitioners can take responsibility to lead when they conceptualise it as inherent in their professional role. Whilst

organisational permission to lead may not always be evident, I suggest there are opportunities for professional practitioners to lead if they have the confidence to embrace them. This does not require practitioners to take risks they cannot defend, but rather, to take ownership of their professional role by upholding professional standards and providing evidence of this in their practice.

Practitioner forums which support an exchange of ideas and legitimise peer learning can enhance confidence and embed a greater sense of professional identity. Additionally, environments which encourage continuous positive, as well as challenging, critical feedback at all levels, can promote confidence and trust.

6.3.3 Educationalists

In relation to educationalist, these findings propose there be a greater focus on two specific areas within qualifying and continuous professional development programmes. This focus includes specific learning about leadership and professionalism, with models of distributed leadership being central. I suggest qualifying programmes consider including such learning to allow emerging professionals within human services to understand the concept of distributed leadership in order to recognise opportunities in the workplace. Whilst on practice placements within such programmes, they could be provided with opportunities to lead as a way of building experience and confidence. If there were to be a greater focus on both professionalism and leadership, these should clearly be enshrined within any professional learning standards.

Additionally, although qualifying programmes might purport to address professionalism, in my own experience of teaching on social work programmes, this is frequently more implicit than explicitly taught. Little

time is devoted to professional attributes, models or 'ways of being' a professional. This was supported within the literature with medical students' wide range of understanding of professionalism through the work of Monrouxe et al (2011). This could be addressed in programmes through a focus specifically on professionalism as a single topic or for example, through the lens of 'graduate attributes'. Many universities are increasingly requiring degree programmes to teach graduate attributes. Within Scottish higher education there has recently been an agreed set of graduate attributes which, whilst contested, form some common understanding of themes (Hounsell, 2011). One of the threads within these attributes refers to 'ethical, social and professional understanding' (Hounsell, 2011:2). If emerging practitioners are to have an informed understanding of what it means to be a professional and how this might be enhanced, then I suggest such inclusion within qualifying programmes is essential.

Another finding which I suggest is important for those educating professionals within human services to consider is the relevance of organisational structure and development to professional practitioners. When undertaking this study, I became increasingly aware that to be in a position to influence or lead within an organisation, not only do individuals require an understanding of concepts of leadership, they equally require to recognise how organisations function. Whilst much of this learning can, and is, absorbed 'on the job', I argue, that locating it within professional programmes, with a focus on known models and frameworks of organisational development, would further aid understanding. This learning could equally be taught at post qualifying level and arguably be of greater relevance once practitioners are immersed within an organisation although I do not think it is either, or but is in fact, a combination of both to allow greater incremental learning.

A final point in relation to educationalists relates to how leadership is addressed within organisations. I have argued largely for a whole organisational approach which recognises each unique context, based on 'leadership at all levels' models rather than 'teaching' individuals in isolation how to be leaders. This requires a rethink by some programmes to ensure that if learners are taught individually, they are supported to continuously embed their learning back into their organisational context. Strategies that use, for example, action learning sets, communities of practice and collaborative learning would all support such an approach.

6.3.4 Service Users, Customers, Patients

The main stakeholders for any human service issue are customers, end users and patients, a title dependent on discipline area. I will refer collectively to these stakeholders as 'citizens'. Studies have suggested a wide range of factors influence the satisfaction felt by citizens in receipt of human services. Many of these require respectful interventions that value the individual. For example, '*people want health services that do more than just deliver – they also want services to treat the user well and make them feel that they are involved in the decisions about their care'* (Public Service Trust, 2010:18).

The voices of 'citizens' are becoming stronger with higher expectations and greater demands being put on services across the sector. The personalisation agenda is seen as being driven by rising public expectations that services should fit the person, rather than be determined by systems. This would suggest organisations that are less bureaucratic and more value driven.

A move towards more individualised services surely requires practitioners who are afforded greater autonomy to engage with creative solutions.

One size will no longer fit all with practitioners increasingly having to find innovative ways to provide unique solutions to meet public demand. These new approaches will require increasing levels of leadership, demonstrated through professional practice that shows initiative, offers creative solutions and values people. A strong sense of professional identity and confidence will allow professionals to begin to relinquish power and start a process of re-balance with citizens and communities. Citizens seek professionals who provide services, not only with respect and care, but respect and care that is authentic and freely given. The findings of this study suggest this is genuinely what professionals also seek, within environments that allow them the opportunity to do so. Authentic leadership has been described as an approach to leadership that emphasises the leader's legitimacy through honest relationships with followers which value their input and build on their ethical foundation (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). It would appear that in the future professionals and organisations will require to find ways to deliver such leadership if citizens and communities are truly to become engaged.

6.4 Originality of the study

I suggest this study is original on several counts, the first being that current literature is scarce and thin in relation to connections between professionalism and leadership and this study provides new knowledge and understanding which can be added to this current body of knowledge. For example, the Leadership and Professional Connections Matrix (Table 2) provides evidence of clear connections, as well as differences, between the concepts of leadership and professionalism drawn from participants' stories

A second original finding within the study is a strong emphasis on 'new, new era' forms of leadership that support distributed or 'leadership at all

levels' models has highlighted different conceptualisations of leadership that have enabled new connections between professionalism and leadership to be made more explicit.

Thirdly, I have proposed a re-conceptualisation of professionalism that incorporates collaborative, distributed, engagement and servant leadership paradigms which I suggest should be adopted across human services, building on existing motivators to 'make a difference'. This new concept strongly suggests '**leadership capacity is inherent in human service professional practice'**.

Finally, emphasis within literature and current research on distributed leadership is located predominantly within educational contexts and drawn from American studies. This study provides evidence within a Scottish context from six different disciplines across Human services.

6.5 Significance of the study

I suggest the study is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it shines a light on the topic of leadership capacity within organisations which is of concern currently to governments, regulatory bodies, organisations, teams and individuals. It is a global issue with a reach across public and private sectors. Whilst adding new theoretical knowledge and potential developments to an under researched area, it offers new thinking and possible suggested changes to enhance practice.

I have provided a new way of conceptualising professionalism that I am not aware has been articulated in this way before. Whilst there is a growing body of high quality research that proposes new models of leadership, this finding provides an opportunity for organisations to develop leadership within existing frameworks. Through the re-

conceptualisation of professionalism, new understandings can emerge about the capacity of both individuals and organisations to find opportunities to support leadership at every level.

If this re-conceptualisation were positioned at the heart of a leadership strategy it could provide greater opportunities for staff to 'engage', which could have the potential to positively impact on culture change. Generally speaking, being 'professional' is seen as positive, as opposed to acting in an unprofessional manner. By connecting the concepts of leadership and professionalism together, this provides an opportunity, when developing one, to be in a position to develop the other. Such a dual strategy to professional (and leadership) development could be very attractive to current resource poor organisations. As identified earlier, the literature suggests current drivers, across both public and private sectors, seek to promote enhanced professionalism as well as enhanced leadership, located within engaging cultures (Alimo – Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2011). Additionally, there are calls that such developments should be based on ethical principles (Greenleaf, 1996; Greenleaf, 2008; Hamel, 2009). This study sits at the heart of these debates and provides a contribution to discourses around these complex issues.

Secondly, despite any adoption of a re-conceptualisation of professionalism, this study is significant because it identifies clearly that, leadership at all levels, has and continues to be undertaken within human services across all six disciplines. If this were made more explicit within cultural environments that supported such activity, there could be potential, not only to improve leadership capacity, but also increase professional confidence and identity.

Thirdly, his study is significant because it provides clear evidence from participant stories that being provided with opportunities to lead early in

their careers gave them greater confidence, a sense of pride and a stronger sense of professional identity. Whilst distributed leadership can only be one variable of many, in building professional identity, it appears to be significant and should warrant further study.

Finally, this study is significant because it adds weight to the growing body of evidence that recognises the importance of organisational culture in both professional and leadership development. It points to and supports change within Human services towards environments that engage more fully with their workforce; create a sense of autonomy and responsibility; encourage innovation and creativity; trust and value those who want to 'serve', to 'make a difference' and move away from risk averse, bureaucratic, managerialist environments.

6.6 Future direction

The key findings of this study are both exciting and illuminating. Whilst I will obviously present them in written form for the purposes of successfully completing this doctoral study, I am also interested that they make a difference in practice. Initially I plan to share them across a range of contexts in an attempt to stimulate further debate. The first of these opportunities being as an invited speaker at the launch of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) Strategy for Building Leadership Capacity in Scotland's Social Services in early 2014. Disseminating findings clearly and accurately should be a major outcome of any research project although not frequently addressed other than in written form. Although the number of qualitative research projects increases, there is evidence to suggest it often has little impact on practice, research, policy or citizens (Finfgeld, 2003; Troman, 2001).

Whilst I plan to write about these findings in more accessible formats, such as journal articles, I additionally plan to engage with potentially interested audiences to help shape these ideas further. Whilst the findings have been drawn together from diverse perspectives, it will only be the culmination of additional perspective that will develop the thinking further. I do not think this is the finished product, but more realistically a small step towards further emergent thinking about professionalism and leadership.

I have agreed to share these findings with the participants who provided the evidence for this study. This audience is the one I most value, not only in relation to their opinion about the ideas presented, but more so about whether they feel I have represented their views accurately and with integrity. When sending them a final copy, I will seek their views with some nervousness and respond to any feedback they offer with humility.

I have already intimated I would like to see a re-conceptualisation of professionalism that incorporates new leadership paradigms such as, collaborative, distributed, engagement and servant leadership paradigms explicitly addressed within professional qualifying programmes, as well as through continuous professional learning opportunities. This is an area of development for future debate. Additionally, I recommended there should be greater understanding across human services about organisational behaviour to enable professionals to influence culture more explicitly. Driving such an agenda forward with appropriate audiences such as universities, local authorities and third sector organisations would be a key aim. At a very basic level, helping to make such concepts as 'distributed leadership', 'servant-leadership and the 'power and ability to influence', less implicitly understood across human services would be a good beginning.

6.7 Final Reflections

Drawing together the stories told within this study, whilst attempting to honour individual perspectives, has been a difficult challenge. Different authors, faced with the same stories, would present different outcomes. My hope is that everyone within this process will have learnt a great deal from re-telling and reading their story. When people re-tell stories of their life and work, some quite different stories might emerge, or previous ones may be elaborated on (Speedy, 2001). No conclusions could have been drawn without the participation of each participant and for this I am grateful.

Through interrogation of the data, many themes have emerged, some of which have not found prominence within the final study. Whilst having the opportunity of shining a gender lens on the data, this has not been realised, despite 50% of the sample being male, 50% female and my own gender, as a female, impacting on the study. By using gender as a criteria within the sample, I may have raised expectations that this might understandably have been a focus of discussion within the study. Due to its absence I feel ethically bound to explore my reasons for omitting this important topic and to reassure the reader it is not forgotten. Through a short discussion I hope to reinforce the integrity of this research by fore fronting issues not selected for discussion, as well as recognising the importance of identifying those included (Israel and Hay 2006).

Whilst I recognise that not integrating gender as a key factor into the implementation, evaluation and dissemination of the research can lead to missed opportunities, I balanced this against other competing topics within this study. I chose to provide a more generic overview of key issues rather than focus attention on more specific topics which I hope to

return to within future research. I was also aware that due to the small sample size, a discussion based on this topic, whilst important, might be limited within this study. Within future research where I might contrast these findings with those of novice professionals within human services, such as I have suggested elsewhere, the scope to address gender more thoroughly might be greater. I am not alone in omitting to forefront gender within research (Ford 2008). The Irish Research Council have been so concerned about such lost opportunities that they have developed a National Strategy to address gender, both male and female, more explicitly within research (Irish Research Council 2013:3).

All qualitative researchers, whilst endeavouring to represent individual and collective story analysis ethically, truthfully and authentically, inevitably would make different decisions about what is fore fronted even if working with the same data. This is due to a wide range of variables including their epistemological and ontological stance, values, interests and engagement with participants. Co-creation of knowledge will vary across and between researchers and researchees. 'The process of qualitative data analysis takes many forms……that involves examining the meaning of people's words and actions' (Maykut and Morehouse 1994:121). What is said is said and what is heard will be different. Ford et al (2008) suggest language can get in the way of us changing our perceptions of the world. For example, the word 'leadership' is defined differently by different people and can limit any common understanding due to pre-conceived perceptions and experiences. There is no doubt narrative research is gendered and political yet the power lies with the researcher who analyses the material in relation to how this might be emphasised.

Whilst recognising the important part gender could play in the analysis of this data I actively chose to forefront other topics on this occasion with a

view to returning to this in future research endeavours. Other researchers, for a myriad of reasons, would and could have made different decisions.

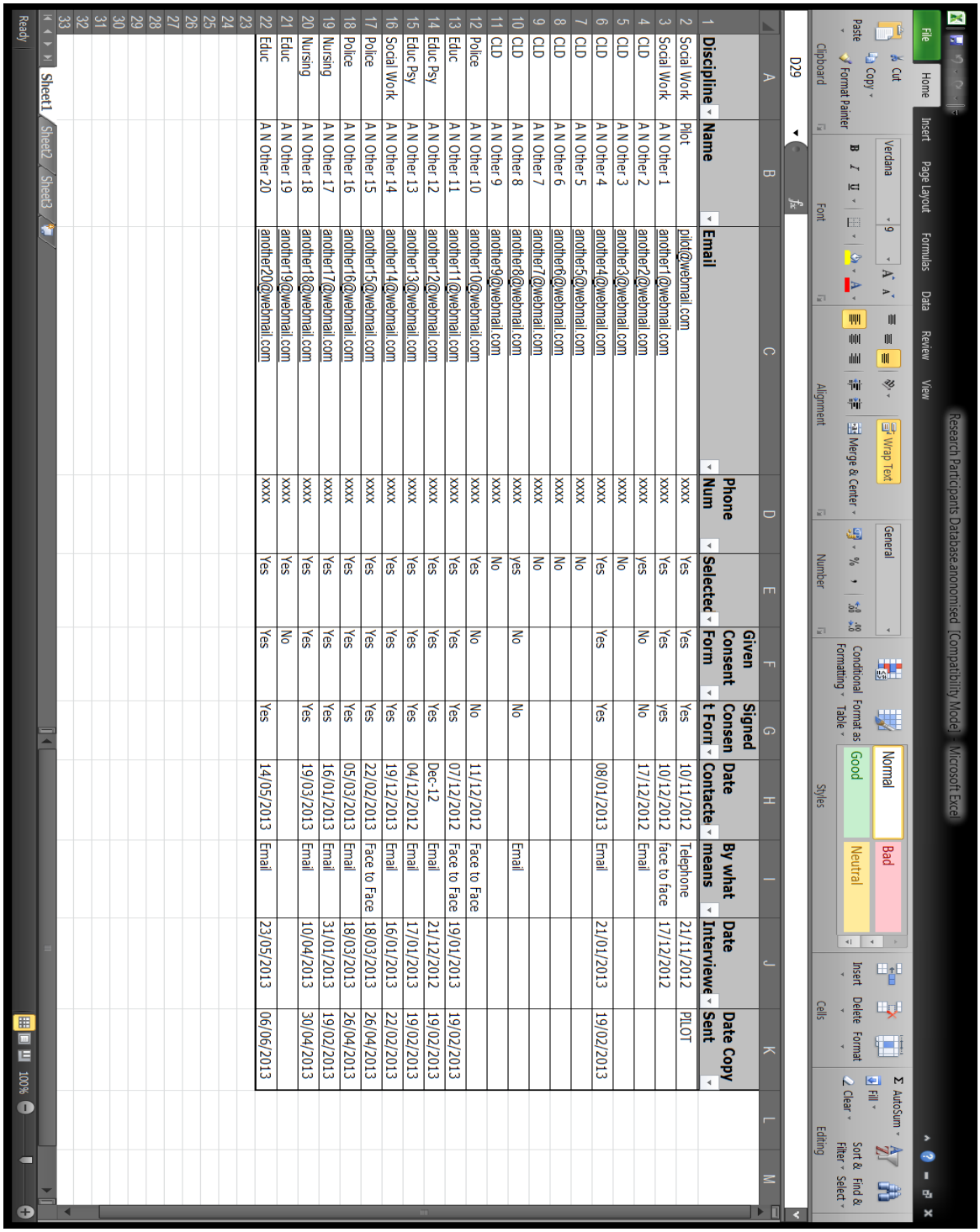
What might I have done differently to achieve robust outcomes? In relation to the research process, I could have been more systematic in my planning. Whilst working closely to a timeline, I failed to identify, and subsequently appreciate, the detailed steps within each stage of the process. With hindsight, a more detailed plan of tasks to achieve at every stage would have aided some of the frustrations I have encountered. Whilst I have drawn attention within the methodology section to an 'audit trail', and although this was in place, in future I would deepen this aspect of my research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In relation to this, and in future qualitative research, I would emphasise the collaborative nature of the process more fully. Ideally I would work with other researchers and have closer scrutiny from a critical friend as well as the 'member checks' I employed within this study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). 'Peer debriefing' as an evaluative tool ensures exposure of your emergent thinking to others which can then be challenged, confirmed and always dissected. Such close scrutiny requires a degree of confidence and ability to absorb and use constructive criticism.

I have gained in confidence through this process. Achieving high level study requires time, concentration, cognitive processes, emotional intelligence, as well as confidence. Having completed this study I do feel more confident in my ability to undertake research at this level, balance competing priorities and write coherently.

'We gain strength, and courage, and confidence by each experience in which we really stop and look fear in the face...we must do that which we think we cannot' (Eleanor Roosevelt)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Tracking Spreadsheet



	Discipline	Name	Email	Phone Num	Given Consent Form Selected	Signed Consent Form	Date Contacted	By what means	Date Interviewed	Date Copy Sent
2	Social Work	Pilot	pilot@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	10/11/2012	Telephone	21/11/2012	PILOT
3	Social Work	A N Other 1	another1@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	10/12/2012	face to face	17/12/2012	
4	CLD	A N Other 2	another2@webmail.com	xxxx	yes	No	17/12/2012	Email		
5	CLD	A N Other 3	another3@webmail.com	xxxx	No					
6	CLD	A N Other 4	another4@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	08/01/2013	Email	21/01/2013	19/02/2013
7	CLD	A N Other 5	another5@webmail.com	xxxx	No					
8	CLD	A N Other 6	another6@webmail.com	xxxx	No					
9	CLD	A N Other 7	another7@webmail.com	xxxx	No					
10	CLD	A N Other 8	another8@webmail.com	xxxx	yes	No	No	Email		
11	CLD	A N Other 9	another9@webmail.com	xxxx	No					
12	Police	A N Other 10	another10@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	No	11/12/2012	Face to Face		
13	Educ	A N Other 11	another11@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	07/12/2012	Face to Face	19/01/2013	19/02/2013
14	Educ Psy	A N Other 12	another12@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	Dec-12	Email	21/12/2012	19/02/2013
15	Educ Psy	A N Other 13	another13@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	04/12/2012	Email	17/01/2013	19/02/2013
16	Social Work	A N Other 14	another14@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	19/12/2013	Email	16/01/2013	22/02/2013
17	Police	A N Other 15	another15@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	22/02/2013	Face to Face	18/03/2013	26/04/2013
18	Police	A N Other 16	another16@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	05/03/2013	Email	18/03/2013	26/04/2013
19	Nursing	A N Other 17	another17@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	16/01/2013	Email	31/01/2013	19/02/2013
20	Nursing	A N Other 18	another18@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	19/03/2013	Email	10/04/2013	30/04/2013
21	Educ	A N Other 19	another19@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	No				
22	Educ	A N Other 20	another20@webmail.com	xxxx	Yes	Yes	14/05/2013	Email	23/05/2013	06/06/2013

Appendix 2 – Pen pictures of participants

The sample of people I selected in relation to my research study were drawn from six key disciplines within human services. Whilst there were other disciplines which I could have included or chosen instead of these, for example, medics, other health professionals or early years workers, I opted for these because of my closer working relationship with these disciplines over my own career. This allowed me easier access to these groups. The six disciplines are social work, teacher education, educational psychology, police, community learning and development and nursing.

I approached my sampling using a quota method followed by snowballing (Neuman1997). This consisted of my making an initial approach to a personal contact from each discipline. I requested they, or a representative from their profession, become involved in the study. Initially I selected six known individuals but sought to widen this to include an additional six unknown individuals to provide greater rigour to the study. I recognised that should I only select known individuals, my existing knowledge of these people may colour my overall findings. For example, if I selected people whom I thought, either consciously or sub consciously, had similar views to me or whom I considered 'good' professionals, this would skew my findings in these directions. Whilst knowing people personally did not necessarily equate to my knowledge of their work, it nonetheless did provide me with a view of them as an individual and therefore a potential view of them as a professional.

Any prior relationship with individuals will provide an additional perspective on my interpretation of their views which I have tried to draw

out through the analysis. I have separated the views of those I have been acquainted with previous to the study with those that have self selected and have been previously unknown to me. The common criteria for all individuals is that they have to have been over 10 years qualified and worked in at least two different organisations within Human Services throughout their career to date.

The following pen pictures outline the sample in respect to their gender, age range, geographic work area and their relationship with me. I have tried to identify my view of their profession based within my own work and life experience as this may influence my understanding and interpretation of individual stories. By taking this reflexive approach, whilst not eliminating bias, prejudice or subjectivity, I am seeking to take these into account when undertaking my analysis of the data and presenting the findings. This recognises that as the researcher, I am part of the social world being studied which calls for exploration and self examination (Alvesson 2002).

Table 3: Pen Pictures

Participant number	Profession	Gender	Age	Location	Link
SW1	Social Worker	MALE	50s	North East of Scotland	Know to me
SW2	Social Worker	FEMALE	40s	North East of Scotland	Unknown to me
EP1	Educational Psychologist	FEMALE	50s	West of Scotland	Suggested to me by colleague
EP2	Educational Psychologist	MALE	50s	South West of Scotland	Suggested to me by colleague
ED1	Teacher	FEMALE	30s	East of Scotland	Know to me
ED2	Teacher	MALE	40s	East of Scotland	Suggested to me by an HEI colleague
POL1	Police	FEMALE	50s	East of Scotland	Suggested to me by colleague
POL2	Police	MALE	40s	East of Scotland	Suggested to me by POL1
NUR1	Nurse	FEMALE	50s	East of Scotland	Known to me
NUR2	Nurse	MALE	40s	Central Scotland	Suggested to me by colleague
CLD1	Community Learning and Development Worker	MALE	40s	East of Scotland	Suggested to me by an HEI colleague
CLD2	Community Learning and Development Worker	FEMALE	40s	East of Scotland	Suggested to me by CLD1

Appendix 3 – UREC approval request

UREC STUDY PROTOCOL

Title

Perceptions of and connections between leadership and professionalism: human service narratives.

Principle Investigator (PI)

Linda Walker, Senior Lecturer and Doctoral student, School of Education, Social Work and Community Education (ESWCE)

Supervisor

Professor Timothy Kelly, Dean of Research, ESWCE

Version Number

Version 1, October 2012

Introduction

This study seeks to provide a small but significant contribution to whether professional identity can be strengthened through opportunities for professionals to take on leadership roles within organisations. It will question whether these opportunities might be conceptualised using a distributed or 'leadership at all levels' model. I will argue that professionals need a deep sense of their own professional identity to have the confidence to work as accountable, autonomous professionals both within their own discipline and across disciplinary boundaries. I would further argue that within the current climate of scarce resources and complex work environments there is a need to discover innovative yet cost effective ways of developing a confident, competent workforce across human services with an ability to deliver quality services. If professional identity can be strengthened through the provision of greater opportunities for professionals to take on leadership roles in practice, there may be less requirement for more formal leadership programmes which have provided patchy outcomes in relation

to building leadership capacity, shown to be costly and unable to accommodate large numbers (Brundrett M 2006; Scottish Government 2008).

Whilst there is a plethora of literature about both leadership and professionalism, there appears to be limited reference to both concepts having any connection (O'Sullivan and McKimm 2011). It is this potential connection that I am keen to explore further. Discourses on leadership models abound generally(Haslam et al 2011;Ryde 2009) and more specifically within the context of this study in relation to unique contextual environments such as social work and the wider public or private sectors (Holosko 2009; Cox 2009;Gill 2009). A new paradigm approach which promotes 'leadership at all levels' is currently gaining momentum as a concept and seemingly has the potential to promote innovation, enhance collaborative cultures and bring about positive change within organisations (Spillane 2006; Gronn 2003; ESRC 2009).

This study will add to limited existing knowledge about the potential opportunities for leaders to be 'grown' within organisations rather than being taught externally.

Aims and Objective

Within this study I will seek the views of professionals from six separate disciplines within human services, both to understand their definition of and perspective on 'being a professional' and their sense of professional identity and to ascertain whether opportunities they may or may not have had to lead within their career has any bearing on these views.

To achieve this I will interview six individuals from the disciplines of social work, nursing, teacher education, community learning and development, police and educational psychology. Through their individual narratives I will explore their personal and professional journeys to becoming the professional they are today. Through an analysis of the data I will hope to gain an insight into how influential opportunities to lead may have been throughout these journeys.

From this data I hope to identify that opportunities either provided to or identified by developing professionals to take a lead role within their organisation (based on a 'leadership at all levels' model) has strengthened their sense of professional identity and understanding about what it means to 'be a professional'. I further want to ascertain whether a strong sense of professional identity supports professionals' motivation and ability to enhance their own and others practice.

Participants

There will be six individuals, one each from the disciplines of social work, nursing, teacher education, community learning and development, police and educational psychology. They will be at a mid to late stage in their career to enable them to identify experiences they might have had, as developing professionals, to take a lead role within their organisation based on a 'leadership at all levels' model.

They will be identified through personal contact as people who have had at least 20 years as a professional within their discipline.

They will initially be contacted personally and provided with initial information about the study in writing which they can read at leisure and make contact if they are interested in pursuing their involvement further.

They will be provided with a written consent form at the first meeting and details of the study to help them make an informed choice about whether to be involved or not.

Criteria for inclusion include at least 20 years as a professional within their discipline; continuous working during that time either part or full time within one or a range of organisations; 50% male and female (3 + 3)

All the participants will be known to the principle investigator only. Their identity will be coded within the research.

Design and Methods

Stage 1 –Information meeting

A meeting with participants will take place to provide verbal and written information about the study to enable them to make an informed decision about participation (approx 30 minutes). Participants will be expected to make a final decision once they have reflected in the information.

Stage 2 - Initial Conversations (max 2 hours)

Participants will be invited to have a recorded (with permissions) conversation with the lead investigator about their own professional development and sense of professional identity based on a set of pre determined questions. These are designed, as participants tell their story, to prompt them to focus on areas of interest to the study, eg opportunities either provided to or identified by them over their career as developing professionals to take a lead role within their organisation (based on a 'leadership at all levels' model); whether this had any impact on their own sense of being a professional; what experiences have they had in their career that may have strengthened their sense of professional identity.

However, these will be limited (see attached Discussion Schedule) as it is important within the study that participants are enabled to let their own story emerge. 'stories are full and rich, coming as they do out of personal and social history...the very act of forming stories requires us to create coherence through ordering our experiences and provides us with an opportunity for reclaiming ourselves and our histories' (Etherington 2004:9)

Stage 3 – Follow up Conversations (max 1 hour)

Conversations will be recorded (with permission), transcribed and participants will be provided with the transcript and offered the recording for verification and an opportunity to reflect on their initial thoughts. They will be encouraged, following reflection, to note any additional thoughts to share with the LI during a follow up conversation.

Each conversation will take place in a mutually agreed safe space where the participant is able to feel comfortable to share their story without interruption. There will be no remuneration for participants.
A copy of the Discussion Schedule is appended.

Data Handling and Analysis

The data collected will be in depth stories told by 6 individuals about their journey to becoming a professional. There will be no intention of drawing comparisons between different stories nor making claims about findings across the range. Each individual will have their own unique perspective. Finding that emerge however, will shine a light onto the perceptions and understanding of a small group of diverse professionals in relation to the aims of the study. If themes do emerge from the data, these will be identified and discussed.
The format of the data will be audio recordings which will be transcribed and the transcriptions will be checked against the audio recordings to ensure accuracy of transcribing process. The data will be analysed through each transcript being exported into N-Vivo qualitative data analysis software. Responses will be thematically coded and the codes cross-checked by co-researchers (doctoral supervisors) to promote what Guba and Lincoln (1994) describe as the credibility of data analysis. Thematic analysis will follow a three step process. First the text will be read through to increase familiarity with the raw data. Next the data will be coded using prompt question headings as an initial coding framework. Third, the codes will be examined, extended or refined for conceptual clarity. It is anticipated that other themes will emerge from the nature of the conversations. Again, the codes will be cross-checked by the co-researchers, and then refined for conceptual clarity.

Each participant will be coded to protect confidentiality. Due to the small number of participants from unique disciplinary settings however, it will be impossible to anonymise type of setting and specific discipline. Each participant will only be known to the PI and never identified by name.

Raw data will be stored within a locked filing cabinet within a secure room on the university campus. Data will be analysed on a computer that is pass-word protected. The study will be written up on the same computer.

The PI will have access to all the data. The doctoral supervisors will have access to the coded data. An administrator will support with the transcribing process once the data has been anonymised and coded.

The data will be kept for the duration of the doctoral study.

Risks

I do not anticipate any risk of harm, discomfort or other risks to participants.

Debriefing Arrangements

Whilst there will be no formal debriefing, there is an opportunity, following my initial conversations with participants (stage 1) for them to reflect on their initial thoughts and add anything further they may wish to do.

Study Duration

Data collection will be between November - December 2012.
This study is the final part of a professional doctorate being undertaken over 3 years part time (2010/13).

Appendix 4 – UREC approval

From: Astrid Schloerscheidt
Sent: 22 November 2012 11:38
To: Linda Walker
Cc: Astrid Schloerscheidt; Elizabeth Evans
Subject: UREC 12135 - approved

Dear Linda,

I have now had a chance to review your ethics application. My apologies for the delay in processing this.

Your study is approved.

Best regards,

Astrid

Dr. Astrid Schloerscheidt
Chair, University of Dundee Ethics Committee

Appendix 5 – Initial trigger questions

Perceptions of and connections between leadership and professionalism: human service narratives.

INTRODUCTION
Thank you for agreeing to talk to me about your journey to becoming a professional. I would like you to start from **your** beginning...and I may ask some prompt questions along the way. These will be to provide you with opportunities to focus on key areas of the research rather than to direct your story.
The key areas are Professional development; Professional Identity; Organisational Complexity and Leadership. I will start with an initial question just to get the ball rolling...
Can you tell me about your journey to becoming a professional?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
What factors drew you into your professional discipline?
Can you identify any particular people, incidents, opportunities or challenges that you think have influenced your professional development?

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY
Can you talk a bit about your sense of your own professional identity?
What do you think has contributed to your current sense of professional identity?

ORGANISATIONAL COMPLEXITY
Working within complex work environments, what are your views about whether having a strong sense of professional identity is important or not?
Have you any views about whether having a strong sense of professional identity helps or hinders inter-professional collaboration across organisations?

LEADERSHIP
Throughout your career, can you provide any examples where you have sought or been provided with opportunities to lead?
Can you offer examples about the outcomes of these opportunities in relation to your own professional development and/or sense of professional identity?
In your opinion, is there any connection between effective leadership and being an effective professional? If so, please can you explain this connection from your perspective.

Appendix 6 – Consent form

Title of Study: Perceptions of and connections between leadership and professionalism: human service narratives.

This study seeks the views of professionals from six separate disciplines within human services, both to understand their definition of and perspective on 'being a professional' and their sense of professional identity and to ascertain whether opportunities they may or may not have had to lead within their career has any bearing on these views

By signing below you are indicating that you have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet and that you agree to take part in this research study.

_____ _____
Participant's signature Date

_____
Participant's name

_____ _____
Signature of person obtaining consent Date

_____
Name of person obtaining consent

"I agree to the use of anonymised extracts from my interview in conference papers and academic publications" YES ☐ NO ☐

"I agree to the audio recording of the interview" YES ☐ NO ☐

Appendix 7 – Participant information sheet

TITLE OF STUDY: Perceptions of and connections between leadership and professionalism: human service narratives

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN A RESEARCH STUDY
You are being asked to take part in this research study, which is seeking the views of a small number of professionals from several disciplines within human services about their journey towards becoming a professional. This will be to both explore your definition of and perspective on 'being a professional' and to ascertain whether opportunities you may or may not have had throughout your career to 'lead' has any bearing on your current sense of professional identity.
I am a senior lecturer and Associate Dean (Social Work and Community Learning and Development) at the University of Dundee and this study is part of my professional doctorate research. I am being supervised by Professor Timothy Kelly and Dr Gaye Manwaring from Dundee and Dr Karen McKardle from University of Aberdeen.

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY
This study seeks to provide a small but significant contribution to whether professional identity can be strengthened through opportunities for professionals, throughout their careers, to take on leadership roles within organisations. Whilst there is a plethora of literature about both leadership and professionalism, there appears to be limited reference to both concepts having any connection (O'Sullivan and McKimm 2011). It is this potential connection that I am keen to explore further. Discourses on leadership models abound generally(Haslam et al 2011;Ryde 2009) and more specifically and within the context of this study, in relation to unique contextual environments such as social work and the wider public or private sectors (Holosko 2009; Cox 2009;Gill 2009). A new paradigm approach which promotes 'leadership at all levels' is currently gaining momentum as a concept and seemingly has the potential to promote innovation, enhance collaborative cultures and bring about positive change within organisations (Spillane 2006; Gronn 2003; ESRC 2009).

Within this study, I am seeking to hear your story about becoming a professional and how this has shaped your professional identity. I am further interested in how seeking or being provided with opportunities to lead throughout your career may have influenced this.

Your participation in this research could benefit people who work across human services by adding new perspectives on current debates about how to improve leadership capacity within organisations.

TIME COMMITMENT
The study will require you to meet with me as the Principle Investigator on three occasions between Nov-Dec 2012. Following an initial meeting to discuss

participation, if you agree to be involved in the study all following conversations will be audio taped and transcribed with your permission.

1. An initial contact to request your participation, provide you with verbal and written information from which you can make an informed decision about whether to become involved.
2. If you agree to become involved, a second meeting will be arranged at a mutually agreeable time and venue to have a conversation about your journey to becoming a professional. (2 hours max).
3. Following receipt of the written transcript (and audio tape if required), you will be asked to reflect on your story and share any further thoughts with me at a follow up meeting.(1 hour max)

PARTICIPATION
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any stage without explanation or penalty.

RISKS
There are no known risks for you in this study.

Benefits
This study will add new knowledge to the fields of academia and practice about potential links between leadership and professionalism which has thus far been sparsely researched.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY
Whilst this study relies heavily on unique stories, the data will be analysed using a coding system so specific information about you will be anonymised. Your identity will only be known to myself and not made available to anyone else. The transcripts and audio tapes will be in secure locations and no linking information will be stored with the transcripts/tapes. The transcripts and recordings will be used in accordance with Data Protection Act and will be securely stored for the required 10 year. After this period the transcripts and recordings will be destroyed. Throughout the data collection process, you will have an opportunity to comment on and change your story as represented through the transcripts.

The final thesis will be sent to you on completion.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS RESEARCH STUDY
I will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact me at l.walker@dundee.ac.uk; 01383 381530 or through Grainne Barr, g.k.barr@dundee.ac.uk

The University Research Ethics Committee of the University of Dundee has reviewed and approved this research study.

Appendix 8 – Final trigger questions

Perceptions of and connections between leadership and professionalism: human service narratives.

INTRODUCTION
Thank you for agreeing to talk to me about your journey to becoming a professional. I would like you to start from **your** beginning...and I may ask some prompt questions along the way. These will be to provide you with opportunities to focus on key areas of the research rather than to direct your story. The key areas are Professional development; Professional Identity; leadership and Organisational Complexity. I will start with a couple of initial questions just to get the ball rolling...

PROFESSIONALISM
Would you describe yourself as a professional?
Can you tell me about your journey to becoming a professional?
What were some of the key influences along the way?
What makes a good professional?

LEADERSHIP
In relation to the concept of 'leadership at all levels'……
Throughout your career, can you provide any examples where you have sought or been provided with opportunities to lead?
Can you offer examples about the outcomes of these opportunities in relation to your own professional development and/or sense of professional identity?
In your opinion, is there any connection between effective leadership and being an effective professional? If so, please can you explain this connection from your perspective
What makes a good leader?

PROFESSIONALISM AND LEADERSHIP
Do you think these two concepts (leadership and professionalism) have any link?

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY
Do you have a sense of professional identity?
Have you thought what might have shaped this?

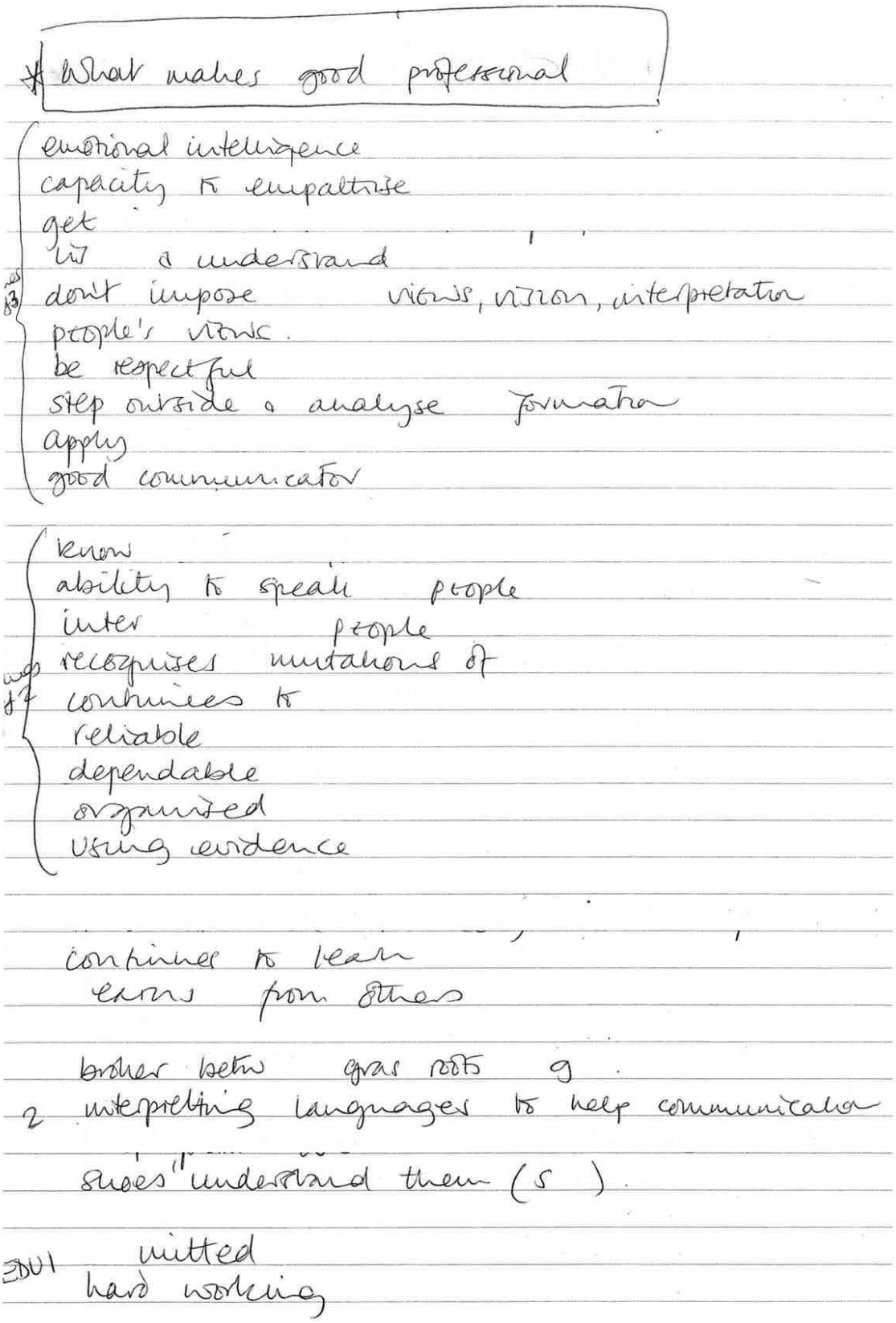
ORGANISATIONAL COMPLEXITY
Do today's complex working environments help or hinder the development of professional identity?
Or leadership? Or professionalism?

Appendix 9 – Definition of dispersed leadership

Dispersed leadership, distributed leadership, collaborative leadership or 'leadership at all levels', within an organisation has been attributed 'with enabling a pooling of ideas and expertise to produce services and leadership energy that is greater than the sum of individual capabilities' (ESRC 2009 in Patterson 2010:6). This type of leadership therefore not only recognises the ability of people within non traditional positions of power or at the top of their organisational hierarchy to become leaders, but also recognises the collaborative nature of such interactions. Within Scottish social services it has been suggested that, 'every front line practitioner should be a leader, challenging and developing practice and looking at opportunities to innovate' (Scottish Executive 2006). A main challenge for the whole UK public sector is to deliver improved services through a motivated workforce in an age of austerity.

A report by Deloitte for the UK government suggests this will not require more leaders at the top but rather, 'it is about exercising more leadership at all levels' (Deloitte 2010). They argue this will support future organisational growth due to accountability being shared throughout the organisation, organisational barriers being removed and promoting the growth of leadership across the system.

Appendix 10 – Extract from reflective journal



trustworthy
work
t
based

EP1
- cognises different perspectives
- works for better outcomes
- put own personal gripes a prej
- listens
- evidence
- doesn't assump
- sed on fa
- profession,

'I suppose than I don't feel alone, do is bigger than me, so I keep strong aron a that is to ensure don't lose sight of the fact I public servant a one voice within.
(1 Good Prof ref 4)

EP2
- skills
- K
- responsible
- ethical

LW
- make relationships
- represent & uphold values/ principles of ~~people~~ own discipline
- put own prejudices aside

it is not about me, it is about others'
(*** Good Prof Ref 2)

genuine
strong — prof identity
*** use evidence — pur fty choices.
respect
good
empathy
present ... really
qualifications
formal informal learning
prof ... a difference
current, up date practice
confidence
respect — behaving
clarity — K kill
status

VR1
keeping up
treating colleagues well
respecting other disciplines
working well
respecting patients
upholding standards.
less casual

* idea that some of the more formal communication seems less respectful now in hospitals (NU 1 Ref 4 Good Prof)

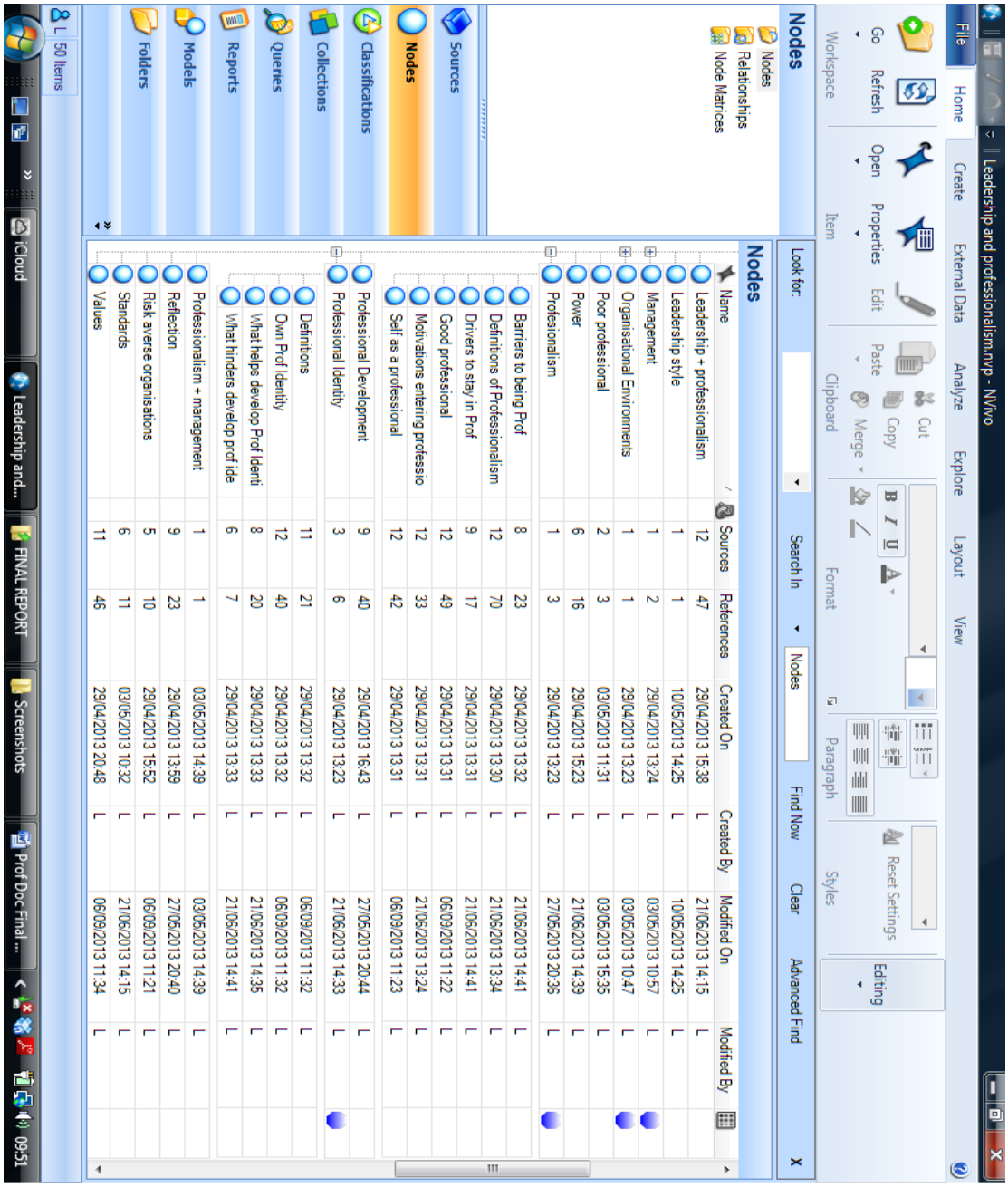
PR1
training & dev
experience/doing the job
reaching standards
enhancing practice
developing self.

~~being~~ a prof – described some – want to talk about.
Talked about needing to have done some junior roles prior to progressing Senior L'ship. (Link to Prof + L.)

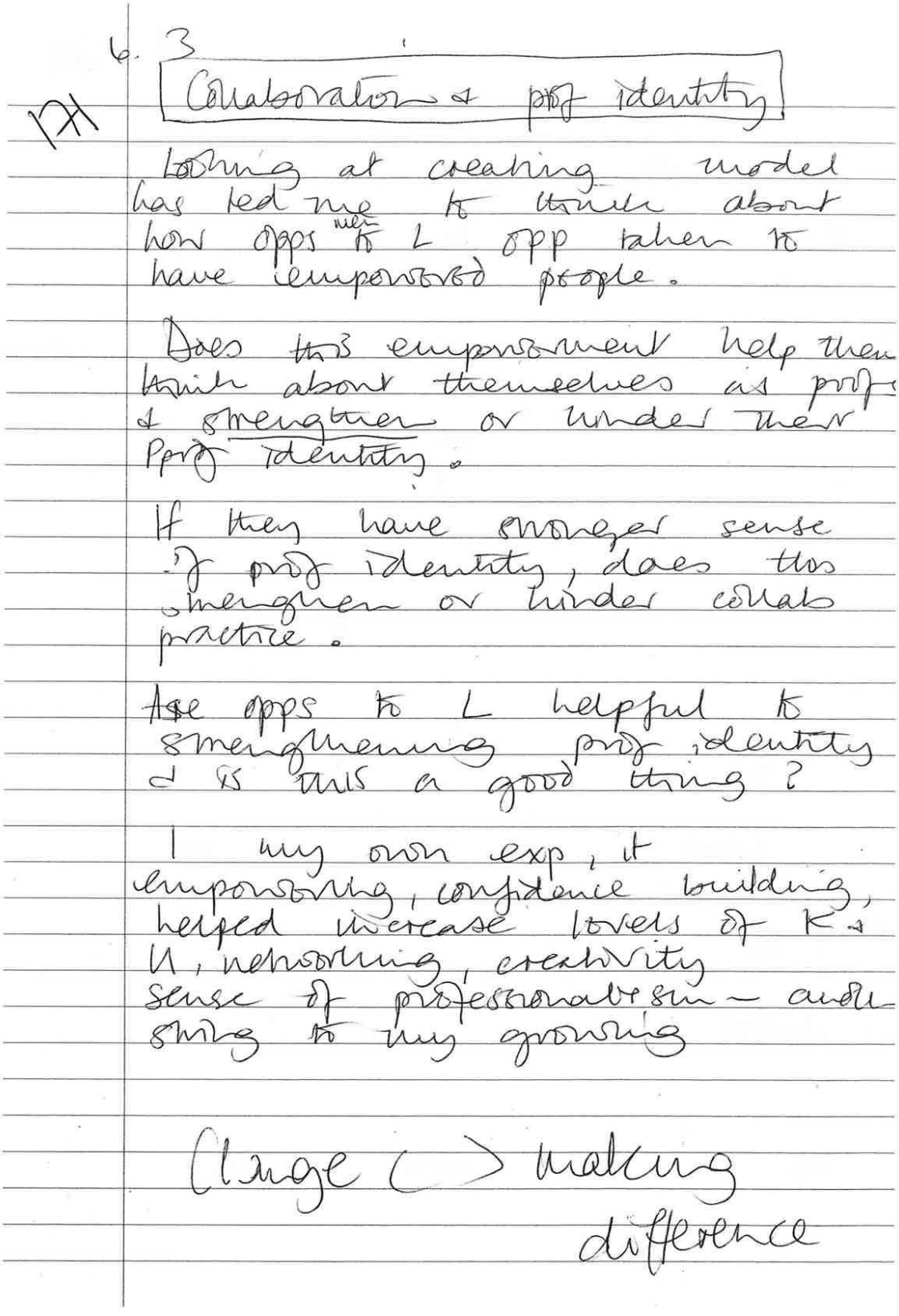
Prof 1
- role modelling
- strives for continuous improvement
- always new things to learn.
- being K.
- academic background/qualif.
- analysis
- being outward symbols - certificates

'in charge of the facts'
capable of doing job
competence.
seen by others prof.
being business like

Appendix 11 – Screen shot of NVivo



Appendix 12 – Lists of emerging ideas



6.3

Collaboration & prof identity

Looking at creating model has led me to think about how opps link to L opp taken to have empowered people.

Does this empowerment help them think about themselves as prof & strengthen or hinder their Prof identity.

If they have stronger sense of prof identity, does this strengthen or hinder collab practice.

Are opps to L helpful to strengthening prof identity & is this a good thing?

In my own exp, it empowering, confidence building, helped increase levels of K & U, networking, creativity sense of professionalism — and going to my growing

Change ( ) making difference

Appendix 13 – Evidence of peer support

From: Elinor Vettraino <elinorvettraino@fife.ac.uk>
Sent: 05 February 2014 15:01
To: Linda Walker
Subject: Testimony

To whom it may concern:

I am a doctoral student on the same programme as Linda Walker at the University of Dundee. As part of my own studies I am looking at the concepts of leadership and professionalism.

During the last couple of years, Linda and I have met on several occasions to discuss our work. It has been beneficial to us both to share emerging ideas and debate different concepts. We are both strong women with a trusting relationship which has enabled us to challenge our thinking and defend our different positions.

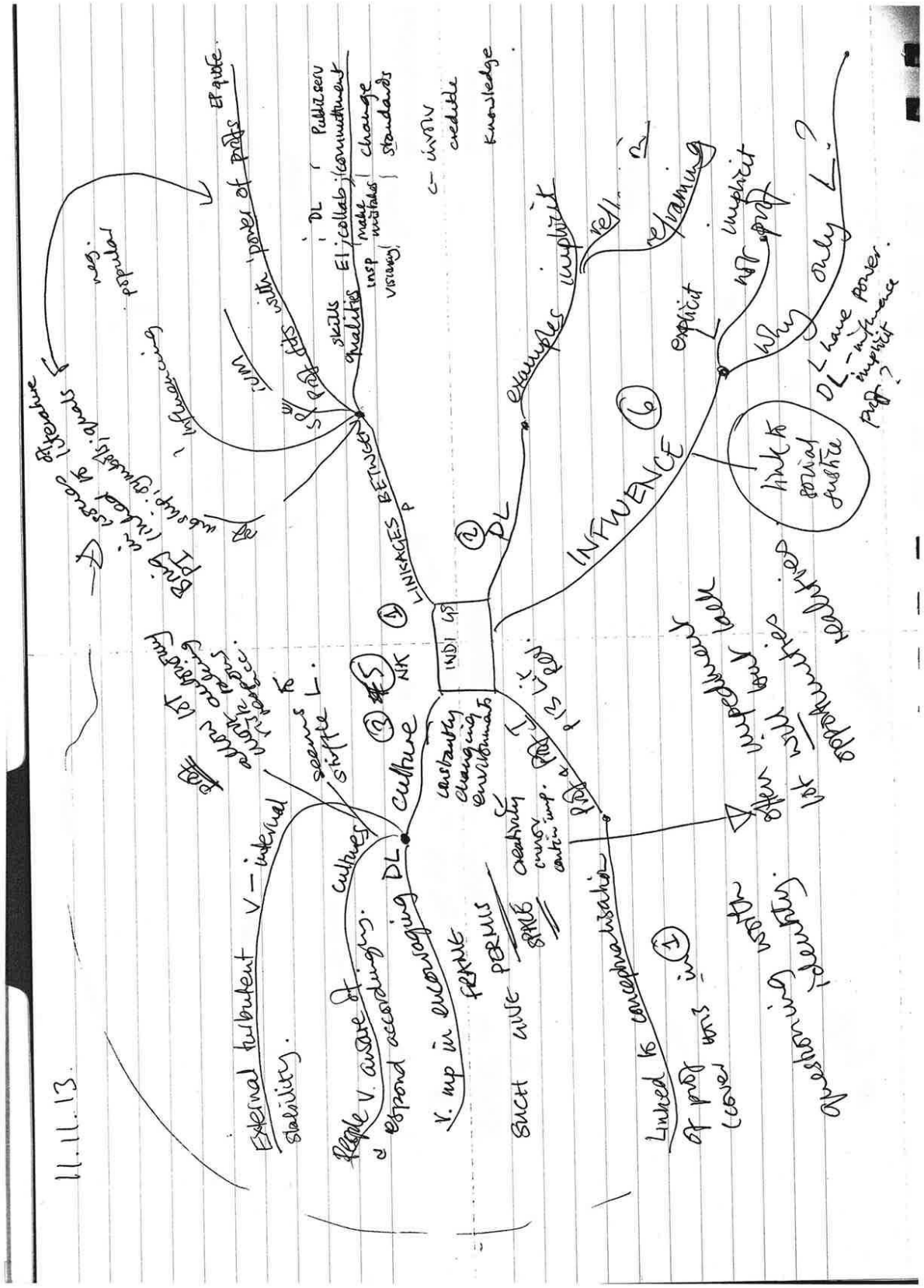
Having this peer support has been invaluable. It has helped me through higher level study, which can be a lonely journey. It has provided me with an opportunity to question my ideas and brought a criticality that has enhanced my work. I feel this has been a reciprocal arrangement and one that has been extremely valuable.

Elinor Vettraino
Department Manager: Creative Arts and Theatre Arts Fife College

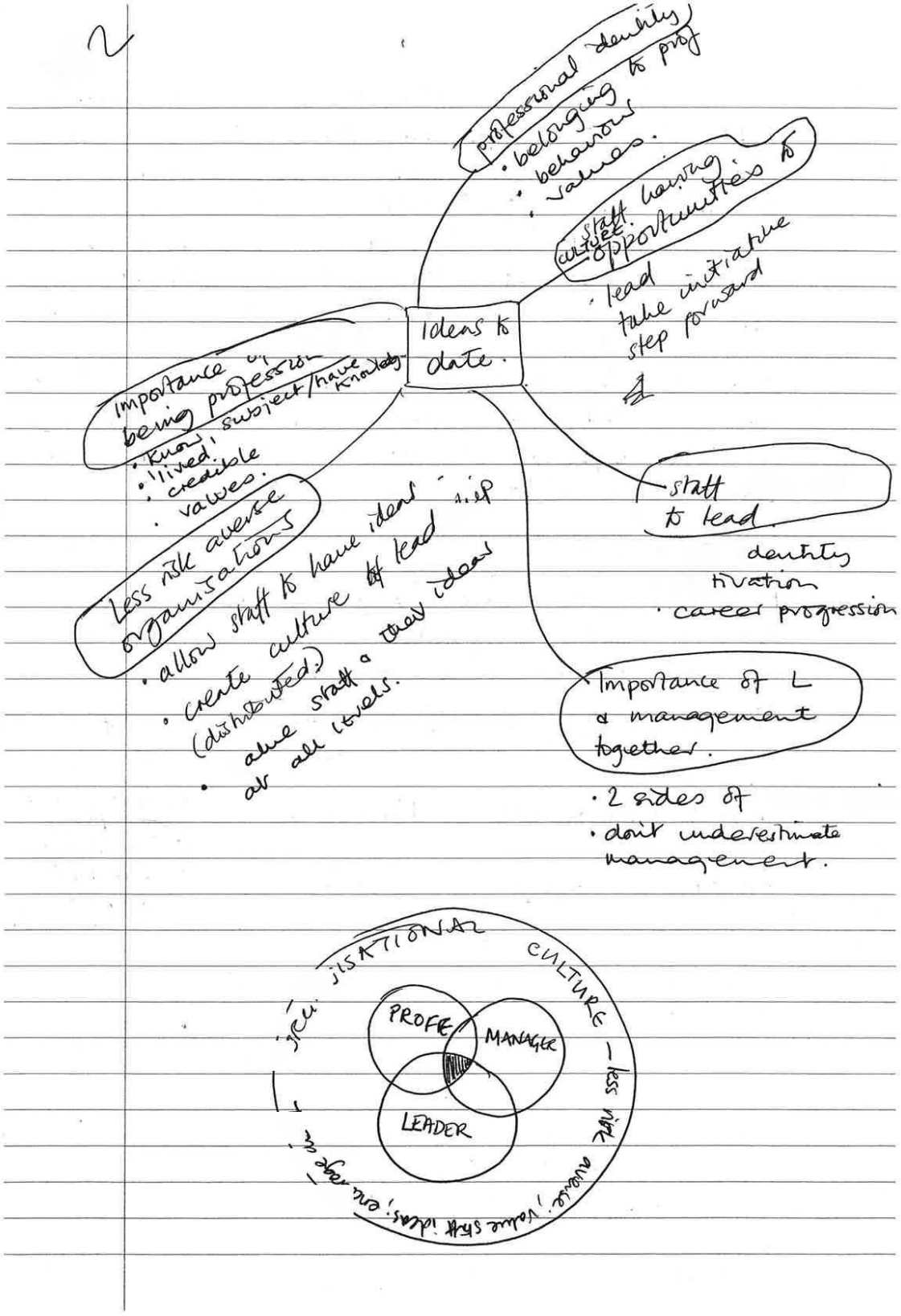
Sent from my iPad

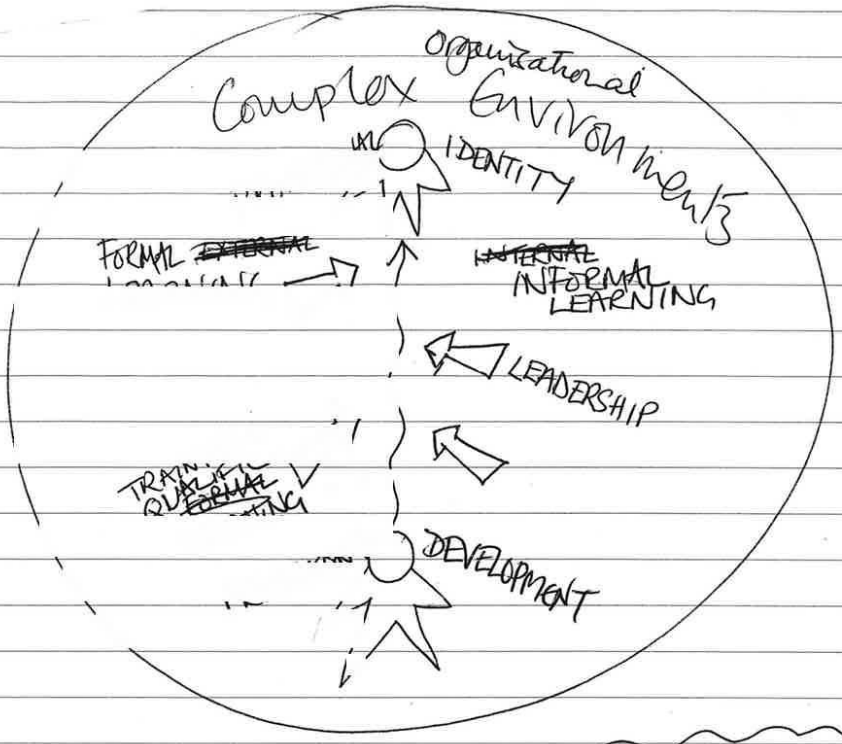
_____

Appendix 14 – Mind mapping of emergent thinking



Appendix 15 – Emerging graphic models





PROF BOUNDARIES

confidence to articulate prof identity & not

COMPLEX ORGS

lay down identities

Overall changing & volatile increasingly no blueprints, BIG pic

LEADERSHIP

opportunities to lead

light in conf.?

> increase prof identity?

Strengthens thro' being part of gp 'belonging'

Need confidence to articulate prof identity.

PROF

Happens over time.

Appendix 16 – Recognition of Prior Learning Claim for Professional Doctorate

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) claim for Professional Doctorate

Student: Linda Walker

Matriculation Number: 99000136

Within this claim for 50% of the professional doctorate, I have provided 4 pieces of evidence. Each of these 4 pieces of evidence includes:

- An outline of the project/chapter
- Narrative matched to the SCQF level descriptors outlining what I have achieved and learnt
- Appendices providing a range of relevant evidence linked to each project

Outline of Claim

Project 1 – Development of Practice Learning Qualifications

This project, delegated in 2005 to the Scottish Institute for Excellence in Social Work Education (SIESWE) by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and overseen on behalf of the SSC by the Scottish Practice Learning Project, had an overall aim to develop a suite of qualifications to support learning across social services in Scotland. These qualifications are currently embedded within and support learning across Scotland. I led the project on behalf of SIESWE.

Project 2 – Development of Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection

This national government funded project was designed to allow students within social work degree programmes to map their specific learning in this area whilst achieving the more generic Standards in Social Work Education. I managed and led this project on behalf of SIESWE.

Project 3 – Developing People: Case studies illustrating how Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQs) have made a positive difference to individuals, the organisation and service delivery.

This social enquiry project was located within a Scottish local authority, working with practitioners to gain greater insights into learning within organisations. Whilst leading this project, I have since worked collaboratively onto phase 2 which explores many of the initial concepts in greater depth and with more rigour.

Book Chapter – Assessment in Adams R, Dominelli L and Payne M (Eds) (2005), Social Work. Themes, Issues and Critical Debates, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan. Updated (3rd edition(2009.

Contents

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) claim for Professional Doctorate

Student: Linda Walker

Within this submission I claim 50% Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for work completed at SCQF level 12 prior to embarking on the Professional Doctorate programme. This work pertains to projects I have completed as Project Manager whilst on secondment from the University of Dundee to the Institute of Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS – formally the Scottish Institute for Excellence in Social Work Education (SIESWE)

I have submitted evidence of work on 3 National Projects (Projects 1, 2 and 3) and additionally a book chapter.

Matrix of Evidence to meet level 12 descriptors Introduction

SCQF level 12 Descriptors	**PROJECT 1 PLQ Project**	**PROJECT 2 CP Project**	**Chapter**	**PROJECT 3 Developing People**
Knowledge and understanding	A critical overview of a subject/discipline, including critical understanding of the principal theories, principles and concepts Demonstrate		Demonstrate a critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development

	knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline			of the subject/discipline
Practice: Applied knowledge and understanding	Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices. Design and execute research, investigative or development projects to deal with new problems and issues	Design and execute research, investigative or development projects to deal with new problems and issues Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances	Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices.	Apply a range of standard and specific research instruments and techniques of inquiry Design and execute research, investigative or development projects to deal with new problems and issues
Generic cognitive skills	Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent	Develop creative and original responses to problems and issues Deal with very complex and/or new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete or consistent		Apply a constant and integrated approach to critical analysis of new and complex and abstract ideas

	data/information	data/information		
Communication, ICT and numeracy skills	Use a range of software to support and enhance work at this level and specify software requirements to enhance work	Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose	Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose	Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose
Autonomy, accountability and working with others	Work in ways which are reflective, self-critical and based on research/evidence	Demonstrate leadership and/or originality in tackling and solving problems and issues Exercise a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional and equivalent activities Make informed judgements on new and emerging issues not addressed by current professional and/or ethical codes or practices		Deal with complex ethical issues Take full responsibility for my own work

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Claim for Professional Doctorate

Student: Linda Walker

PROJECT 1

Project to undertake the development of Practice Learning Qualifications (PLQs)

This project, delegated in 2005 to the Scottish Institute for Excellence in Social Work Education (SIESWE) by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and overseen on behalf of the SSSC by the Scottish Practice Learning Project (SPLP), had an overall aim to develop a suite of qualifications to support learning across social services in Scotland. The suite of qualifications had to align to SCQF levels 7,9,10,11; contribute to improved learning cultures within organisations; articulate as far as possible with similar existing qualifications and replace the then existing Practice Teaching Award, a qualification designed for social service staff who assess social work students in practice. The project had to incorporate collaboration across disciplines and stakeholders across the social service workforce. My role was Project Manager with a remit to complete the project brief to the required specification. The tight timescale of 6 months (June – Dec 2005) was challenging although the document (Appendix 1 – Practice Learning Qualifications and Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services) Document) was completed on time and to specification.

Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)

Knowledge and understanding of **current government policy, collaborative working, project management and cultural change within organisations** were evidenced within this submission. The following information is based on these areas matched against the level 12 SCQF descriptors for K and U.

I required a *critical overview of the subject area of project management including a critical understanding of principle theories* through gaining a qualification in an

internationally recognised project management method (Appendix 2 - PRINCE 2 Certificate) which provided me with skills, expertise and confidence to oversee the project and take on a leadership role. I *demonstrated knowledge and understanding through personal investigation into current Government policies and research* such as Life Long Learning Strategy and organisational learning cultures.

In the three years since the PLQs were introduced they have made a significant contribution to the enhancement of learning within the social service workplace. Across Scotland, there are a range of programmes ongoing at various SCQF levels based on the Standards developed within the project. Indeed, the University of Dundee has one of these at level 11 starting later this year embedded within the MSc Professional Development Programme. (Appendix 3 – Letter from Head of Education and Workforce Development SSSC; Appendix 4 – Letter from Coordinator Scottish Social Services Learning Network South East).

Practice – applied Knowledge and Understanding

Examples of my practice skills matched against the SCQF level 12 descriptors in the areas of **intra and inter-professional collaboration, negotiation, mediation and project management** are evidenced through application of knowledge and understanding.

I *demonstrated originality and creativity in my approach to setting up this project.* By taking a skills set approach (deciding on a set of required skills; choosing people with the right skills rather than representatives from stakeholder agencies). I avoided having to work with a very large, widely group of representative stakeholder partners. As there was some initial hostility to change, this approach provided transparent decision making and a mechanism to listen to a very wide range of opinions. To achieve this balance and equity, I created small collaborative enquiry groups (CEG) based on key themes. Group facilitators were tasked to collaborate widely with a range of others in the action phases and as a management group, we reflected on information received. (Heron and Reason 2001) (Appendix 5 – Project Development presentation)

I utilised communication skills transferred from direct social work practice such a negotiation, mediation and talking to individuals at a range of levels from government civil servants to service users. Communicating clarity of vision was essential and to achieve this I used a number of graphic images (Appendix 5 – Project Development presentation) and opened a VLE site with housed project materials and was accessible to all project participants. (Appendix 6 – screen shot) This helped to create shared understandings and allow for critical debate over time*. I demonstrated an ability to design and execute a development project to deal with a new issue.*

Generic Cognitive Skills

Generic cognitive skills are evidenced at level 12 through examples showing **complex decision making, analysis of information and reflective/reflexive practices.**

I developed *creative and original responses* to issues such as who might deliver the PLQs when HEIs would not agree to collaborate. The original idea of developing a set of standards across all four SCQF levels was that HEIs might agree a co-ordinated approach to programme delivery – one programme for Scotland. When it became clear this was, at the time, a step too far, a new approach had to be found. Consultations with the FE sector highlighted enthusiasm to become involved and to date, many of the accredited PLQ programmes are run under the FE umbrella through Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). (Appendix 7 - consultation with SQA)

Debates between universities about a uniform set of qualifications were often heated, near stalemate and required careful, diplomatic facilitation. At times it was described like, 'herding cats' with competition versus collaboration. I drew on my knowledge of research, collaboration and systems thinking (www.openlearn.open.ac.uk) to problem solve within these complex dilemmas. On reflection, I was working with what Grint would describe as a 'wicked problem' which had no easy solutions and required new thinking to emerge over time (Grint 2008). Looking back, many of the difficult issues arose from fast paced change and a resistance by some (often powerful individuals and groups) to resist change. (Parton 1996) Again, drawing on transferable social work skills assisted my practice by recognising that whilst change has to be ongoing, it is equally important to support people through the stages of grief this might unleash (Kubler Ross 2003)

Successfully manoeuvring the project through this stage demonstrated an ability to *deal with complex new issues and make informed judgements in the absence of complete information.*

IT, Communication

Communication evidenced at SCQF level 12 included my work as **project manager where I evidenced advanced skills communicating across a range of domains and used technology to promote communication across diverse groups.**

Frequently within this project I presented and adapted complex information to a range of audiences One successful aspect of the project was to enlist the services of a service user and a carer to work, as part of the management team, to seek the views of a wide range of service users and carers across Scotland. To achieve this I graphically outlined the project aims, sought to identify the supports required by service users to achieve the task and provide the necessary resources (Appendix 13 – Service User/Carer presentation; Appendix 8 – Call for service user and carer involvement).

Regular updates were required for the commissioners of the project (SSSC) in report form including updates of the risk register, lessons learnt and project target forecasts. Information was disseminated on a frequent basis to Scottish Government, HEI/FE sectors , Social Services Agencies, SU and Cs and at conferences (Appendix 9 – update reports to sponsors; Appendix 10 - PEPE Conference paper, NZ 2007 and verification letter)

I used *a range of software to support and enhance work at this level* through the use of technology as a communication tool within the project. A closed site was identified within a virtual learning environment (VLE), to which project participants were invited to contribute and to store all project data, documentation and act as a communication hub and ultimately an on-line community of practice (Barab 2001). Having used this way of working previously I knew it could aid transparent information flow and common, shared understanding (Dixon 1999). I regularly updated the site, encouraged others to contribute as a way of shared participation and introduced humour as a form of breaking

down barriers and further encouraging engagement and a sense of 'community' (Vecchio et al 2009) As is not uncommon however, there was limited participation in discussion boards possibly due to a lack of confidence in the system or their own IT skills, exposure to a public (albeit closed) site, agreement or disagreement with the project progress (but don't want to comment) or more pressing work commitments. (Appendix 11 –screen shots).

Autonomy, accountability and Working with others

Examples of my practice matched against SCQF level 12 descriptors include my ability to **make difficult decisions both individually and collectively, as project manager, take responsibility for my own actions and decisions whilst being accountable to a project board, advanced abilities to motivate, enthuse and show leadership to diverse groups.**

Many of the issues thrown up by this project were new. As project manager, I was working in the 'swampy lowlands' rather than the 'safe high ground' (Schon 1983). Certainty was not an option but having very clear project plans provided a framework from within which emerging ideas could flow (Appendix 12 – Development and Consultation Process). This allowed both myself and the project team to have some degree of structure when everything around us was at best a storm and at worse a tornado!

I *demonstrated leadership in tackling and solving problems* by developing a clear structure before inviting people to join the project. All roles and responsibilities were identified in writing and the team were invited to add to these to create a sense of ownership and participation (Appendix 14 - project plan). The skills of the project team were recognised in that we were all leaders within our own sphere, yet clear about our roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and reporting channels. This sense of dispersed leadership added to the confidence and strength of the team (Pearce and Barkus 2004) *I worked in ways which were self reflective based on research and evidence* through the utilisation of action research methods, which required us as a project team to continually move through cycles of reflection and action to develop new understandings (Dewey 1938) At the end of the project I invited the management team to lunch and we

celebrated the success of the venture. Showing appreciation to people, particularly when they have contributed fully is often overlooked and can de-motivate staff whereas criticism is all too often the default mode.

I had to make some difficult decisions within the project although these were made within my remit as a project manager and within the reporting arrangements with the Board. The role of project manager is to oversee all elements of the project, seek to keep within timescale and budget and report formally within staged timescales and/or on a major issue/crisis basis. I did not have to evoke major issue/crisis reporting although towards the final stages of the project I was hospitalised and unable to complete the final part of the report. It was testament to the rest of the team, the robust nature of the project framework and the dispersed leadership that the project delivered on time, within budget and to Project Board and SSSC approval. (Appendix 15 – Minute of Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services) Management Group Meeting).

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Linda Walker

August 2010

Project 1 - Appendices

DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY AND IN SOME CASES COPYRIGHT REASONS THE RPL APPENDICES HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE FINAL SUBMISSION

Appendix 1 – Practice Learning Qualifications and Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services) Documents

Appendix 2 – PRINCE 2 Certificate

Appendix 3 – Letter from Head of Education and Workforce Development SSSC

Appendix 4 – Letter from Coordinator Scottish Social Services Learning Network South East

Appendix 5 – Presentation – Development of Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services)

Appendix 6 – Screen shot

Appendix 7 – Consultation with SQA

Appendix 8 – Call for Service User and Carer involvement

Appendix 9 – Update report to sponsors

Appendix 10 – PEPE paper and presentation

Appendix 11 – Screen shot

Appendix 12 – Development and Consultation Process

Appendix 13 – Presentation to Service Users and Carers

Appendix 14 – Project Plan

Appendix 15 – Minute of Practice Learning Qualifications (Social Services) Management Group Meeting

PROJECT 2

Project to develop Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection and Evaluate the embedding of the document across HEIs (2004 – 2008)

My role within this project was to lead and manage the process of moving from a high level Scottish Government (then Scottish Executive) directive about how child care and protection might be taught on social work qualifying programmes to an operational solution which was acceptable to all universities that deliver social work education across Scotland. The initial directive was brief with no boundaries set in relation to operational process or outcomes. (Appendix 1 – Specification for Development of the Practice Learning Qualification (Social Services). The skills of leadership as defined by Handy (1993) suggest a leader shapes and shares a vision with others which in turn assists them to make sense of their involvement. My role was to work collaboratively with all stakeholders*, seeking ways to initially shape and then share an emerging vision about how this Government directive might be realised. To achieve this I drew up an initial project plan (Appendix 2 – Child Protection Training and Development Plan). To oversee the project and provide an inclusive perspective, I invited key stakeholders onto a reference group which met on a regular basis to scrutinize progress, advise on direction and support the overall work of the project team. (Appendix 3 – Child Protection Training and Development Project – Reference Group). There was no doubt in my mind that this was a top down 'planned' as opposed to an bottom up 'emergent' change within the social work education sector which was more likely to be met with resistance (Cornelius 2004) A high level multi-perspective reference group could potentially help shape the planned changes and support the project team find solutions to problems in relation to both the development and implementation of the project outputs within the sector. **My role within this process at SCQF level 12 evidences competence to 'Design and execute development projects to deal with new problems and issues' and 'Practice in the context of new problems and circumstances.' (Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding)**

I carried out an initial audit of child care and protection teaching and learning across all social work qualifying programmes in Scotland (Appendix 4– HEI audit report) to ascertain the current level of activity and potential for social work graduates to meet the required vision of the Scottish Executive. This vision was that all graduating social workers would have a defined (yet to be defined) level of skill, knowledge and understanding in relation to child care and protection which would be the same wherever they undertook their degree programme.

Credibility of the project team in relation to expertise in child care and protection was crucial to the success of the project within the sector. Initially, I employed a child protection specialist as project officer but when she left the organisation, I communicated and engaged with the University of Dundee and successfully secured the services of Professor Daniel as a consultant on the project supported by two project officers from the Child Protection unit. This group of three alongside myself formed the project team. (Appendix 5 – Project Team)

Following publication of the audit, the project moved through a series of stages to develop what was to ultimately become the Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection (Appendix 6 – Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection – final document). This document, endorsed by the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Social Services Council, (Appendix 7 – Ministerial Foreword) became mandatory from 2006 (Appendix 8 – SSSC/SE expectations) for all social work qualifying programmes in Scotland. To achieve this, **I 'communicated at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapted this communication to context and purpose' at SCQF level 12. Additionally, 'I demonstrated leadership in tackling and solving a problem' by seamlessly employing credible project team members.**

My role to lead and manage the project required me to keep the project on time, within budget and to minimize risk. Additionally, communication with all stakeholders in a variety of formats was imperative as was continued support to the project team. I provided support to the team through regular formal meetings (Appendix 9 – Minute of Child Protection Project Meeting) and informal contact, particularly when the project officers came in the firing line from 'stakeholders' opposed to the changes. I used coaching skills through active listening and encouragement; problem solving through

setting out options and modelled good practice by accompanying project officers to key meetings. Kotter (1995) suggests that for change to be successful, 75% of a company's management needs to "buy into" the change to enable a critical mass to emerge. This can take time but is a worthwhile investment in relation to achieving positive outcomes. Whilst it could be argued the project would enhance collective social work education, HEIs were understandably threatened by what they saw as 'top down' government interference in the social work curriculum which might be just the 'thin end of the wedge' in relation to further interference. As a project team we had to negotiate the 'swampy lowlands' (Schon 1987) which was hostile territory, inhabited by our own colleagues. The navigation of this phase of the project was tricky as we sought to develop a new framework that was robust in terms of curricular content, acceptable to the Scottish Government and 'fit for purpose' in the eyes of our colleagues.

At SCQF level 12 I demonstrated the 'development of creative and original responses to problems' through coaching and modelling and how to 'deal with complex professional issues' within a social work education context.

This challenge was met head on by the organisation of a series of events across Scotland designed to meet 'stakeholders' on their own territory and allow their voice to be heard. Additionally, all university departments were visited to allow academic staff teams to 'have their say' and views from these sessions were collated and evaluated (Appendix 10 – consultation with HEIs).

My role within this consultation process was to design, develop and support the delivery of the key messages from the project. As a team we jointly collated the draft materials to share with stakeholders and devised a presentation format to present these. We needed to give a consistent message across Scotland, and be in a position to collate a wide variety of views.

Project staff were frequently 'in the firing line' with the role of project manger being to offer a space both physical and emotional at time where team members could reflect on their encounters. The overwhelming resistance and aggressive behaviour of a minority did take us by surprise and we had to often 'regroup', seeking to understand and

problem solve. During this phase we often re-framed the key messages as we sought to understand and be understood. Project officers frequently commented on my role as pivotal, providing strong leadership and keeping the project focused on the overall outcomes, through a time of confusion, change and emerging, often opposing, ideas. (Appendix 11 – Letter from Helen Whincup).

At SCQF level 12 I 'exercised a high level of autonomy and initiative in professional activities', 'made informed judgments on new and emerging issues not addressed by current professional practices' and often 'identified and offered original insights into complex issues'

Publication of the document required a new set of skills. Close editing of the work had to be undertaken by myself, the team with others enlisted who were less familiar with the document to provide an objective view. Through careful negotiation, explaining the importance of this new document being closely aligned to the previously published, Framewok for Social Work Education in Scotland (2003) I gained government approval to use a similar cover design to this document because this would add 'authority' and familiarise it in people's minds with the already accepted Framework. (Appendix 12 – Letter from Minister for Education and Young People).

At the implementation stage, further engagement with stakeholders took place following the publication of the Key Capabilities document. This was in tandem with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) who would have future responsibility to ensure all social work programmes adhered to the requirements set out in the document. It was my role to negotiate this transition from IRISS to the SSSC, ensuring a smooth passage through the use of clear communication. I achieved this through the Reference Group where I proposed clear recommendations and decisions were made and recorded. (Appendix 13 – Minute of Child Protection Training Project Reference Group).

Phase 2 of the project which was to evaluate the embedding of the Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection document consisted of the same team in similar roles. I continued as project manager, driving the work forward within a defined timescale and budget (Appendix 14 – Child Protection Training and Development Project – Phase 2).

I instigated and developed a web based micro site within the IRISS website which acted as a communication tool for the social work education community and repository of examples of good practice created by the community. (Appendix 15 – Screen shot).

Good practice examples were drawn via a series of national workshops with key stakeholders across Scotland. Again, I reinforced key messages through a presentation used at each session which was developed between the SSSC and project team. (Appendix 16 – Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection Presentation) and later converted into a training pack (Appendix 17 – Key Capabilities: Workshop Pack). This collaborative approach highlighted the move from IRISS to the SSSC in relation to 'ownership' of the Key Capabilities document and a shifting of responsibility from the development and evaluation stages to the implementation and monitoring by the organisation that approves and regulates social work qualifying programmes. I used a range of complex communication methods such as written explanations; meetings; e-mail; mind-maps and conversations. The officer from the SSSC and I worked in tandem over several months to collectively understand old and identify new issues which enabled her to gain a clearer understanding of priorities prior to taking the work forward on behalf of the Council. Evidence of the SSSC taking responsibility for ongoing embedding of Key Capabilities in qualifying Social Work programmes is recorded in an update for a Reference Group Meeting (Appendix 18 – Reference Group Meeting 8.10.07).

Phase 2 of the project drew on research and enquiry skills, communication and IT literacy. This small scale project had a final budget of £22,000 (overall budget for both phases £118K) which I managed and drew on action research methods, using cycles of enquiry and action (Dewey 1938) Using qualitative methods of data collection allowed individual voices to be heard and a range of views and ideas to be incorporated into the project. I created systems that supported these collaborative approaches through the availability of the website, which I kept updated regularly, and the use of the national workshops provided real engagement with stakeholders and increasingly a common understanding about the project aims and objectives. A whole range of outputs were gathered in the form of 'good practice examples' which were hosted on the website for use by students and the wider learning community. As project manager, I was responsible for liaising with the IRISS technical team with specifications for the site design and regular updating of microsite content. Creative ways to encourage

stakeholders to engage with the site were crucial such as offering a prize draw to students who became involved with the project (Appendix 19 - student prize draw info) and drawing up a template for practice educators and academics to input information. The microsite is still available through the IRISS website to date and regularly cited by students and practice educators in relation to good practice examples. Finally, dissemination of information was provided to a wider audience when one of the project officers and I presented project outcomes at a national conference (Appendix 20 – presentation and notes from Health and Care conference, Glasgow).

The above demonstrates an ability to Design and execute research to deal with new problems and issues and Knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research which makes a significant contribution to the development of the discipline.

*Stakeholders in relation to this project include university social work programme staff, practice educators, link workers, agency training and development managers, service users and carers

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Project 2 - Appendices

DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY AND IN SOME CASES COPYRIGHT REASONS THE RPL APPENDICES HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE FINAL SUBMISSION

Appendix 1 – Specification for Development of the Practice Learning Qualification (Social Services)

Appendix 2 – Child Protection Training and Development Plan

Appendix 3 – Child Protection Training and Development Reference Group

Appendix 4 – HEI Audit Report

Appendix 5 – Project Team

Appendix 6 – Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection – final document

Appendix 7 – Ministerial Foreword

Appendix 8 –SSSC expectations

Appendix 9 – Minute of Child Protection Project Meeting

Appendix 10 – Consultation with HEIs

Appendix 11 – Letter from Helen Whincup

Appendix 12 – Letter from Minister for Education and Young People

Appendix 13 – Minute of Child Protection Training Project Reference Group

Appendix 14 – Child Protection Training and Development Project – Phase 2

Appendix 15 – Screen shot

Appendix 16 – Key Capabilities in Child Care and Protection Presentation

Appendix 17 – Key Capabilities: Workshop Pack

Appendix 18 – Project Manager Reference Group Meeting Update 8.10.07

Appendix 19- Student prize draw info

Appendix 20 – Presentation from Health and Care Conference, Glasgow

PROJECT 3

'Developing People. Case-studies Illustrating how Vocational Qualifications have made a Positive Difference to Individuals, the Organisation and Service Delivery.'

Introduction

This project was initiated in 2006 whilst I was Institute Projects Manager at the Scottish Institute for Excellence in Social Work Education (SIESWE) which later became the Institute for Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS). Initial discussion between SIESWE and the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) with Perth and Kinross Council (PandKC) centred around supporting PandKC create a stronger learning culture within their organisation. (SCIE 2005) One area of success the Council wanted to build on was a widespread programme of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) which many staff had successfully completed although there was a significant minority who appeared reluctance to engage. It was agreed I, as project manager on behalf of SIESWE, would devise a project working with two small groups of staff who had been supported by the organisation to recently complete their SVQ. The overall aim of the project was, using a small scale social enquiry approach, to capture their experience and gain insights into how this qualification might have enhanced their practice. There was no stipulation at this stage about specific project deliverables (which changed later) although it was agreed that findings would be distributed widely throughout the organisation with a hope of encouraging greater uptake of SVQ qualifications. The final deliverable, viewed by the organisation and specific staff involved in the project as most appropriate to encourage and support further learning, was a booklet outlining individual stories. (Appendix 1 – Developing People booklet)

The two groups of staff involved in the enquiry, illustrated as case studies within the booklet were:

Case Study 1

The group of staff within this case-study all successfully completed their SVQ3 Children and Young People over a period of 3 years, although not all working to complete the qualification at the same time. The group all work in the Early Years Resource Team with

a combined total of 54 + years experience in the care sector. They all had previous qualifications (NNEB, HNC) prior to embarking on their SVQ and described themselves as confident in their work practices.

Case Study 2

The small team within this case-study have all successfully completed their SVQ3 'Promoting Independence' and are all community support workers forming part of a community mental health team with over 30 years collective experience within the care profession. One person had an HNC in Social Care gained in 1998 with the other two holding no formal qualifications.

Perth and Kinross endorsed the final booklet within the forward by stating:

The Council are pleased to endorse the publication of this study which recognises the growing status and value of VQs to the creation of a skilled workforce, and applauds the effort made by staff to achieve these qualifications. Drawing on a wide range of resources, Perth and Kinross Council have invested heavily in the development of their staff to meet a variety of demands including registration requirements, best practice imperatives and demographic forecasts. (Developing People 2007 p1)

SQCF level 12 evidence

Applying a range of standard and specific research instruments and techniques of inquiry I set up the project based on a social research model. Social research is interested in research 'with' and not 'on' people using predominantly but not exclusively qualitative methods of investigation.(Bryman A 2008) Using a case study design, I met with individual staff and teams on several occasions to hear their experiences of gaining their SVQs and to capture their individual stories. Individuals became partners in the inquiry process. The posture of 'indwelling' or 'living' with participants in the research through listening to and valuing their storytelling was a key aim of my approach (Maykut and Morehouse 1994). Storytelling is a powerful and enduring means of communication that has widespread appeal and when shared with others, has greater value.

Our capacity to express ourselves through narrative forms not only enables us to reshape, reassess and reconstruct particular events, it allows us to learn from discussing our experiences with individuals who may raise alternative views, suggest imaginative possibilities and ask stimulating questions (McDrury and Alterio, 2002).

During this inquiry participants shared their stories about their practice and together we reflected on the meaning and how, having a deeper understanding of this, it might enhance future practice. Doing this as a collaborative activity introduced multiple perspectives which resulted in richer outcomes. To achieve this, I introduced a four staged framework based on reflection and analysis of critical incidents (Appendix 2 – Journey to SVQ3). Critical incidents are snapshots of something that happens to service users, carers or practitioners which can be positive or negative (Rich and Parker 2001) Reflective practice requires participants to examine what they did, how and why they did it, how it felt and what the consequences were with a view to enhanced learning leading to enhanced practice. This helps to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Bailey 1995).

During this process, **I demonstrate knowledge and understanding that is generated through personal research or equivalent work which makes a significant contribution to the development of the subject/discipline.** This was achieved:

- by engaging with participants, building their confidence to engage with research and enquiry through a stepped approach ie 4 staged reflection framework (Appendix 2 – Journey to SVQ3)
- undertaking individual interviews and focused discussions
- providing guidance regarding tasks (Appendix 3 – guidance to participants)
- agreeing the final deliverable (booklet) with participants and managers as the most appropriate form of communication to encourage others' to engage in SVQ training.
- negotiating the above deliverable with the organisation as a communication tool to support learning

Following the completion of this project, the booklet was distributed widely both within P andKC and to a wider audience across Scotland. This was achieved by sending the

information to all Higher Educational Institutes (HEIs), Local Authorities, Further Education Colleges, Learning Networks and a range of voluntary and private agencies that support SVQ development with their staff. A direct impact on P andKC was their request for further research from IRISS building on this initial project.

Apply constant and integrated approach to critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, information and issues

Throughout the process, alongside the individuals and groups in each case- study, I collected a range of data which suggested that staff had internalised their learning and no longer recognised it as important, '*that is just what I do in my work with the children', 'that's just what comes naturally. It's not anything special'* (participant quotes) and were underselling their skills, knowledge and understanding. I drew on my knowledge of adult learning theory, recognising that adults require safe environments within which to explore new learning and relate these to their own experiences (McGrath 2009) The idea of incompetent and competent consciousness led me to explore how retrospectively the groups might begin to 'unpick' their practice and recognise their own skilled approaches. To achieve this I used systematic questioning to draw out their stories in an attempt to support individuals to move from their unconscious competence(being unaware you are good at a skill) where they didn't appreciate what they knew because it was 'second nature', to one where they could understand the learning involved in undertaking that skill. Some writers (Baume 2004 in Williams and Rutter 2010) suggest this is the fifth stage to the 'unconscious competence' four stepped framework which moves from initial unconscious incompetence (ignorant about what you don't know/could do), through conscious incompetence (understanding what you don't know/could do) to conscious competence (being good at a skill and knowing it). This fifth stage, described as 're-conscious competence' or 'reflective competence' recognises that to support the learning of others, individuals have to be able to understand how they learnt themselves, by reflecting on their own learning. I used a series of questions (Appendix 2 – journey to SVQ3) and I asked the groups to address the questions individually in relation to practice they felt they had improved as a result of the SVQ experience. This was followed by conversations with individuals to support them to deconstruct their learning and represent it in story form to identify the steps taken throughout the learning journey. Participants moved swiftly to recognise new realities which gave them a deeper confidence in their abilities. There was also a new possibility for enhancement not only of their own practice but that of colleagues as they could now support their learning. These staff are all required to be registered with the SSSC with a

need to continually enhance their practice through Post Registration Teaching and Learning(PRTL)(SSSC 2003a) Additionally the SSSC Codes of Practice support staff throughout the social services sector to support the learning of others.(SSSC 2003b).

Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose

During this project, I communicated on a regular basis with senior managers, training staff and front line workers on a regular basis. As I was not familiar with the content of the SVQ programmes, I took time to read and understand some of the issues to enable me to be in a position to engage more fully with the front line workers who were the participants in the study. When meeting with them I organised timings to suit individuals and the group, making sure they were well informed prior to meeting about times and expectations. I sought to understand through active listening and engagement in conversations using techniques such as reframing; questioning and using appropriate body language eg eye contact, nodding, relaxed, open posture. (Richmond and McCromskey 2000).

When deciding on the key project deliverable, I used negotiation skills with senior managers who initially wanted the output to be in the form of an academic paper. The front line workers were very clear they wanted a publication that was accessible to their peers and not something that, as they described it, would 'gather dust on a shelf.' Within this context I agreed with the participants and advocated on their behalf with senior managers. Funding allowed for a booklet to be published through the PandKC and the groups were involved in the final content of the publication.

One important aspect was that they wanted pictures to accompany their stories that reflected and valued the people with whom they worked. This pointed us to pictures by children and people with mental health issues which I sourced. (Appendix 1 – pictures within final booklet).

I wrote to the artists, thanking them for their contributions and sent a small token of the group's appreciation. They also received a copy of the final work. (Appendix 4 - letters to contributors).

Take full responsibility for own work

I demonstrated that I took full responsibility for my own work within this project as I negotiated the project plan from the outset, shaping it with the stakeholders concerned who included PandKC senior management, individual front line staff, their line managers, training managers and my own organisation. I drew up a project plan for senior management which was approved, initially with one group of people (case study 1) followed by a request to involve another group.(case study 2). This endorsement of the initial work and release of further funding allowed the project to be further enriched.

Although I showed evidence of independent work, this was within the framework of working in my own organisation and adhering to the requirements of the 'host' organisation. This involved keeping the training manager up to date with progress (Appendix 5 - progress reports); signing in and out of 'host' buildings; understanding health and safety regulations such as noting fire exits to the group when in unfamiliar settings; acting in a professional manner by exercising good timekeeping and showing respect.

Equally, regular reporting within my own organisation was key to my professional approach. I discussed progress in supervision with my manager and sought appropriate advice about methods of investigation and delivery options. I drew on the wider team as appropriate, for example using their expertise for proof reading, typing final drafts and calculating costs. Although autonomous working is important, it is vital to recognise when a project can be enhanced through the introduction of the skills of a wider team. Diamond (2007) suggests strong teams are the product of strong leadership. Within this project I sought to take full responsibility for my own work whilst showing leadership to others in my immediate team and demonstrating a professional approach to the participants and 'host' funding organisation.

Deal with complex ethical and professional issues

As discussed earlier completion of the final document required a series of pictures as requested by the participants. When doing research ethical considerations have to be addressed at all times. I was mindful that the use of pictures should not be 'tokenistic' and should be respectful of the artists. To adopt a 'non tokenistic' approach I sought advice from several 'experts' in the fields of childcare and mental health who might have access to artistic materials. Initially the project participants had suggested they ask their own service users (children and adults with mental health issues) to provide artwork which was an idea we explored together. My role during this exploration was to act as 'devil's advocate' to help enable us collectively to identify relevant ethical issues. The participants were a group of inexperienced inquirers so my approach was enabling and facilitative so that they were not disempowered. The very notion of 'research' can frighten people and one of my overall aims was to support this group of staff to enjoy further inquiry through their own continuous professional development.(Cresswell 2007) From this we raised some ethical dilemmas. How comfortable might the service users be to refuse such a request when they were the recipients of a service from the teams? This could be seen as an abuse of power by the teams. If it was deemed acceptable within the boundaries of agency guidelines, how feasible would it be to gain 'informed consent' from a child? We could have sought consent from the parent or carer of the child but was it then ethical to 'use' the child's artwork without their direct permission? Similar issues related to the adults with mental health issues, however, once we had explored this in depth, we decided not to endeavour to seek permission from the organisation's direct service users. Apart from the issues raised above, I was aware we would have had to work though the organisations ethics committee which, although wholly appropriate had we wanted to pursue this avenue, would have taken more time than we then had. As project manager, and in partnership with the participants, I took a pragmatic approach in the end to enable the project to complete on time and within budget. This resulted in an approach to an independent voluntary organisation which ran an art project for people with mental health issues. They were keen to have their art work disseminated widely and once approached, individuals were delighted to have their work published. (Appendix 4 - acknowledgement to artists) Additional artwork was completed with permission from the child and the parent from another source unrelated to the 'host' organisation.

Greater impact was achieved through dissemination of the findings from the inquiry at an international PEPE conference in Edinburgh, January 2008. (Appendix 6a and 6b).

Ultimately this project had many intended and some unintended outcomes which both enriched the inquiry itself and all those involved. The preface within the final deliverable was testament to many of these outcomes,

The purpose of this guide is to encourage and support others to embrace learning within the workplace in the same way as two groups of staff within Perth and Kinross Council have done. The experiences of the staff telling their story are unique and cannot be replicated in exactly the same way elsewhere. However, the groups have learnt many lessons from their experiences and hope that, by sharing these, they may support and even inspire others to embrace learning more fully. *(Developing People 2007 p5)*

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Project 3 - Appendices

DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY AND IN SOME CASES COPYRIGHT REASONS THE RPL APPENDICES HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE FINAL SUBMISSION

Appendix 1 – Developing People booklet

Appendix 2 – Journey to SVQ 3

Appendix 3 – Guidance to participants

Appendix 4 – Letter to contributors

Appendix 5 – Notes of meeting to investigate how the Institute/SPLP might work with P and K Council to provide evidence of good practice

Appendix 6a – Abstract for PEPE Conference

Appendix 6b – Formal Learning in the Workplace - Presentation

Book Chapter

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Demonstrate a critical, detailed and often leading knowledge and understanding at the forefront of one or more specialisms

The writing of this chapter was for me breaking new waters. It was an opportunity to marry two concepts together, that of assessment and the process of enquiry. The co-author and I collaborated (50% each) (Appendix 1 – Co-author confirmation) on the central idea of social work assessment being an holistic '*activity which is ongoing'*. It is a process rather than a one off activity. My co-author drew on her previous extensive work on assessment, introducing the reader to the concept of assessment as a 'web' of integrated activities whilst I brought my knowledge and understanding of an enquiry approach which we then 'knitted together' Using a case study approach to illustrate our points, we wove the learning about assessment into this text (Appendix 2 - Chapter).

Although each of the concepts introduced within this chapter in themselves were not new, the treatment of them and the inter-relationship we introduced was. The reader is invited to think about engaging in social work assessment as if they are doing a piece of research or an enquiry. The reader is taken, step by step, through a process which seeks to support action and reflection within a social research framework which mirrors the steps taken in any collaborative enquiry.

When writing this I drew on my own experience of social research, particularly from my previous MSc submission, (Walker 2002).This piece of research involved setting up a collaborative enquiry group with an overall remit to explore, within a given timescale, the concept of inter-professional collaborative practice. Within the group, participants, who were co-enquirers and from a number of different disciplines, used a range of media to share individual reflections and new knowledge as the group sought to discover new

ways of understanding and defining the concept. Drawing on the work of Morgan (1997), data was presented using metaphor and imagery to illustrate sometimes difficult to explain ideas and thoughts. (Appendix 3 – Illustration from MSc submission)

The transferability of the concepts described above which I used within this chapter drew me to accept the original challenge to co-write the chapter because they are transferable across disciplines. I am particularly interested in the common ground between professions and I like to work on the boundaries between two or more professions – that of my own dominant profession of social work and others such as nursing, community learning and development, police, medicine and increasingly less 'obvious' professions such as art and design, law and architecture. Writing this chapter allowed 'common' concepts to be explored and potentially used by different professional groups. Wenger (1999) describes 'brokers' as being those professionals who have a foot in two or more professions and work towards common purposes and collaboration between them – 'brokering' understanding. From an early stage in my career, I have been drawn towards and interested in the commonalities and differences between professions based on values, practices and cultures. Gaining insights into the norms and work of other professions helps, in my view, shed light on my own profession which in turn allows for greater insights. However, although the concepts within this chapter have the potential to be transferable across professions, with hindsight, I have missed an opportunity to achieve this because the text is marketed at a social work/social care audience. Had I taken a more critical approach to this issue, on reflection I ought to have built on this chapter subsequently, adapting it for other audiences such as health and education. This is an area for further consideration in the future.

Demonstrate originality and creativity in the development and application of new knowledge, understanding and practices.

Whilst writing this chapter I again drew on the work of Morgan and more latterly, Owen (2004), using illustration as a format to support common understanding and clarity for the reader. (Appendix 4 - Illustration within chapter)

Since writing this chapter, I have built on the use of illustration and metaphor in my work both in relation to work with students and peers. For example, I introduced an

exercise into the development day for a group of colleagues which required them to draw their vision of their discipline as a vehicle. The group then used the various perspectives to discuss common areas and identify difference whilst seeing a collective way forward. The exercise proved positive for the group and although challenges were identified and some tensions raised, the medium itself helped to diffuse these through the introduction of humour brought about by the wide range of drawing abilities within the group. (Appendix 5 – Current illustration)

Another example was the use of a wardrobe as a metaphor to describe to students the concept of an e-portfolio. Owen (2004) suggests that poor communication is the reason many organisations and institutions fail to realise their full potential and the way to fix this is to translate concepts and ideas into concrete, tangible, shared meanings with anecdotes, metaphors and stories being an ideal medium. By explaining that the portfolio and wardrobe were both 'containers' to hold objects, I was able to explore the idea that the clothes in the wardrobe were akin to the objects students had to collate within their e-portfolio for assessment. Therefore, I suggested they think about the age of the object/garment, ie, was it appropriate to include as evidence in their final submission either because it was less robust, 'shabby' or current and up to date? Also, by thinking of compartments within a wardrobe, students were invited to explore different types of evidence ie shoes, scarves, hats etc rather than evidence being one amorphous mass. (Appendix 6 – metaphor presentation for students)

Feedback from both students and colleagues who have used this metaphor has been positive in relation to supporting understanding of a sometimes difficult to grasp concept. (Appendix 7 - e-mail from colleague)

Although I favour the use of illustration as a communication tool, I am aware that for many people this is not their preferred medium of learning and I have to be mindful of the learning styles of others. There have been times over the last few years when colleagues have requested lists rather than mind-maps which have been described as messy and confusing.

Communicate at an appropriate level to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose

Completing the chapter has allowed new ideas to be accessed by a wide audience of students, practitioners and academics. This wide ranging group, with differing levels of understanding means that the information within the chapter has to both be of an acceptable academic level to other authors within the text such as Cree (2009) and Dominelli et al(2009) who are all leaders within their field, as well as meeting the brief of bringing clarity to a student audience. To achieve this balance, my co-author and I spent time discussing the remit, using the technique of mind-mapping, (Buzan 1995), to establish a working relationship, identify key areas to include within the chapter and allocating work. Working with a more experienced academic was central to the success of this project with the skills of coaching, mentoring and supervision being employed throughout by my co-author. Since this experience, I have utilised these skills myself with others, working on joint projects, eg - writing a joint paper with a less experienced colleague (2011) – and building my own coaching skills by gaining a Certificate in Coaching Skills in April 2011. (Appendix 8 – Coaching Skills Certificate)

Within my current role as Associate Dean within the School of Education, Social Work and Community Education I continually use a range of communication skills to support staff in their roles. This is evidenced, for example, in my work mentoring new staff; chairing programme director meetings; overseeing the work of administration staff; dealing with poor performance and conduct issues; being part of the senior management team and conducting objective setting and review meetings. Being supported myself whilst completing this chapter allowed me to recognise the value of academic leadership which has since enhanced my own practice.

The chapter is often cited in student work on assessment and the main text has been updated and reprinted since original publication. The learning for me has been immense in that I am now more confident in my own ability to publish and to do this in a collaborative manner meets my own learning style and work commitments. I have recently written a paper jointly with another colleague and we have presented our draft work at a conference which has been a similar experience. (Appendix 8 - Walker and Fenton 2011 – work in progress)

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Book Chapter - Appendices

DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY AND IN SOME CASES COPYRIGHT REASONS THE RPL APPENDICES HAVE NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN THE FINAL SUBMISSION

Appendix 1 – Co-author confirmation

Appendix 2 – Chapter

Appendix 3 – Illustration from MSc submission

Appendix 4 – Illustration within Chapter

Appendix 5 – Current Illustration (with permissions)

Appendix 6 – Metaphor presentation for students

Appendix 7 – E-mail from colleague

Appendix 8 – Coaching Skills Certificate

Appendix 17 – Feedback and Response to Feedback on Claim

School of Education, Social Work and Community Education

Professional Doctorate Programme

Assessment of Claim for Recognition of Prior Learning

DSW

Student Name		Linda Walker
Amount of Claim (as % of programme)		50%
	Comments	
Knowledge and Understanding (KU)	I was surprised that there was no claim to KU for project 2. I can only think that this was because your claim wasn't to Level 12 knowledge of child care and protection, but there was other knowledge underpinning your management approach, wasn't there? Use of literature is sparing at times. Taking project 1, for instance, sometimes whole pages will go by with no literature. On the whole, I thought that there was too much reliance on the evidence in the appendices and not enough on the reflective analyses for each project, which only amounted to around 17 pages in total. Given that there was such a strong emphasis on management and leadership, that seemed to be the obvious place to expand a critical narrative. For some of the appendices it wasn't such a problem, they were clearly at Level 12. For others, however, you were basing your claim on the underpinning skills and knowledge being Level 12. In order to do that, the narrative needs strengthening.	

Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding (P)	Again, too often more implicit than explicit. Just needs a bit more beefing up in the narrative with clearer critical reflection on how the appended evidence meets the claims.
Generic Cognitive Skills (G)	As with project 2 and knowledge, I thought you had scope to say something about both generic cognitive skills and autonomy, accountability and working with others for the chapter. In particular looking at the issues of co-writing.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills (C)	This runs throughout, and is clearly one of your strongest assets in making the claim. One of the challenges for you is taking some things, like presentations, and showing how they are part of a larger Level 12 approach. How, for instance, does what you did differ from students at lower levels might do? The answer, it seems, lies in how you conceive of them as part of a larger communications strategy. Highlighting that strategy seems central. For project 2, I thought there was more scope for analysis of why people didn't engage with the discussion board. There's research not only on why they don't, but on how to get people to engage.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others (A)	Another very strong area, and one which comes through strongly.
Original Contribution to Knowledge	Frequently overlooked in RPL claims in favour of the SCQF, originality is nonetheless a core requirement for all doctoral work. There are times when you make a claim to an original contribution to knowledge or understanding, and it's well evidenced. At other times, opportunities to do so seemed to be missed.
General Comments Overall, I have little doubt that there is material here to merit the 50% claim. You have been particularly adept at selecting and presenting work that matches your strengths to the SCQF and I would be confident that with relatively little extra work the narrative could be expanded to make what's currently implicit more explicit. Quite a few of the appendices had been included for the reader's information, to give background to projects, and so on. Whilst	

helpful in that sense, the appendices really need to be more focussed on your own work. For instance, in project 2, what would have been lost to the reader if Appendix 1 had been removed and, instead, critically summarised in your own narrative? Also, is this document in the wrong place, it appears to relate to project 1. Occasionally, the precise status of appendices becomes problematic, for example on Project 1, Appendix 1, I'm not clear whether your claim is that this is evidence of successfully managing a project, or if, in addition, you are claiming sole or part authorship of the actual document, though clearly both are valid.

Some specific requests for change:

Project 1

The narrative for appendix 2 needs explanation if it's to meet Level 12.

Appendices 5 and 6, whilst clearly relevant and appropriate to the project, aren't obviously at Level 12. Can this be drawn out more clearly in the narrative?

Project 2, appendix 5 (Project Team), appears to be the missing appendix A from appendix 1 in project 1, rather than the project team for the Key Capabilities. Could you check this in case I'm wrong. Again, however, I'm not clear what the purpose of adding this as an appendix is, you've named two of the four individuals in the text and could easily just add in the names of the other two project officers there.

Project 2, appendix 3 appears to be missing.

Appendix 6 is obviously a crucial document. However, I was left with the feeling that it was somewhat left to speak for itself. What were your claims: co-authorship, vision, management of the process? For such a high impact output, the claim in the narrative seems somewhat muted.

I'm not sure why the Ministerial Foreword (appendix 7) is included again given that it's already in appendix 6.

consultation planning + scope
consultation process
outcomes of consultation + formal report
Reporting to reference gp.
support to PO's other process
what done differently.

The source of appendix 8 needs to be specified.

Appendix 10 has a similar issue to 6. Given that you weren't the author your role needs greater clarification and reflection in the narrative.

Whilst interesting and potentially relevant, I'm not sure how appendix 12 relates to the specific claim it is being used to support.

Please check appendix 17. It looks as though it may have been wrongly compiled. Also, your specific role in the development of the pack needs clarification in the narrative.

Project 3 was, in most ways more straightforward, mainly because of the slightly longer narrative and less reliance on appendices. However, it was a little frustrating that the key appendix (1) doesn't seem to carry your name anywhere! Whilst, unfortunately, it's not untypical of in-house publications to omit some crucial bit of information, usually a date, I don't want to just infer your role. Can you clarify that you were the author/editor of the work?

Project 4 needs, I think, to focus solely on the book chapter. It's not clear that any of the rest of the material is sufficiently substantial to warrant a Level 12 claim. Neither does it seem necessary given the overall portfolio.

Marker Murray Simpson	**Date** 12 July 2011
Recommendation	**return for amendment**
External Examiner comments	

Professional Doctorate Programme
Assessment of Claim for Recognition of Prior Learning
Responses to feedback from Murray Simpson, 12th July 2011

Project 1
The narrative for Appendix2 needs explanation if it's to meet level 12

By completing the PRINCE2 qualification, I gained the confidence and ability to integrate project management skills and theories into my project management role. One of my key strengths has always been an ability to think strategically. The discipline of the PRINCE2 approach provided me with new knowledge and abilities to focus on both the micro and the macro. The qualification was demanding resulting in a final 3 hour written exam which required detailed work. The confidence achieving this gave me was immense.
Following completion of the programme I became equipped with the knowledge and understanding to plan, implement and complete both small and large scale projects. Within the context of this particular project, although this theory (and renewed confidence) was crucial, having to translate theory (particularly minute detailed project planning) into practice was a steep learning curve. I was also working with a project team, most of whom had not had the training, so I needed to also translate many of the complex ideas from the PRINCE2 methodology into meaningful practice. To achieve this I introduced the broad concepts, for example, of phasing projects; introducing timelines and risk assessment in 'bite sized' chunks rather than overwhelming people with infinite detail. I used pictorial images to explain complex interconnections and spent time with people talking through the key concepts and ideas. Gradually, the key elements of the method were 'fed into' the project and taken on board by the team who themselves said they felt they were learning new skills through the integration of theory and knowledge (Watson et al 2001)

Appendices 5 and 6, whilst clearly relevant to the project, aren't obviously at level 12. Can this be drawn out more clearly in the narrative?

The use of graphical images to translate complex information is not a new concept. We respond to stories more readily than strings of facts and understand complex ideas much easier when we relate them to something we already understand. People will grasp ideas much quicker if you find something normal in the world, whether it is a thing or an occurrence that demonstrates your idea. Morgan's (1997) use of metaphor, whether verbally described or pictorially represented, supports this view. He suggests his whole approach to understanding organizations is to help them find a metaphor that will really give them leverage for what they want to do. Within project 1,when working with a high level of complexity, as described elsewhere in this submission, and seeking fundamental change across 'an organisation' (the social services sector), the enormity of the task could be overwhelming, not only for the direct change agents (the project team - who would be initially in receipt of most information) but also the wider workforce (who would be catching up with information through the change process) Using images to relay complex information and ideas, as seen in appendix 5, is an attempt to unpick the enormity of the task clearly for people.
Managing major change is in itself a complex process so project teams have to recognise that different people react differently to change and everyone has fundamental needs that have to be met. These needs might, and often do, involve loss with people going through a 'change curve' over the life of the change process (Kubler-Ross 2005) To achieve major change that has the greatest positive impact, expectations need to be managed and

people's fears addressed. These fundamental principles of change management require project teams to, amongst other things, have excellent communication skills to impart information and ideas to a wide audience in a way that allays fears and understands the need to engage people in the change. Moving people from a position of resistance to change to understanding and even accepting the change requires skilled facilitation. I used the pictorial images and the breakdown of information, as seen in appendix 5, to achieve initial project and later workforce 'buy in' to the proposed changes and this is offered as an example of skilled facilitation.

Appendix 6 offers evidence in relation to demonstrating originality and creativity in setting up project 1. Whilst the use of the VLE was not original and creative in itself, the use of this technology within this context was innovative at this time. The use of 'My Dundee' out with an educational context, to act as a major communication tool to support a project within the social services sector had not been done before in this context. Whilst the use of technology, for example, in the form of closed project sites, blogs and wikis are now common place, this demonstrated a new approach to project management across the sector. It allowed an inclusive approach with information being freely available at all stages, not only to the smaller project team, but also to a much wider audience of participants who signed up to be involved. Although engagement with the discussion boards was at times low, there was significant evidence of traffic on the site and information being accessed. This is in line with other on-line projects where some people find it difficult and 'unsafe' to participate publicly on-line but are keen still to be involved through 'watching'.

Project 2, appendix 5 (project team) appears to be the missing Appendix A from Appendix 1 in project 1, rather than the project team in Key Capabilities. Could you check this in case I am wrong Project. Again, however, I'm not clear what the purpose of adding this as an appendix is, you've named two of the four individuals in the text and could easily just add the names of the other two project officers there.

Agreed. I have now moved the incorrect project team back into project 1within the portfolio – where it belonged!

I have also identified the correct whole project team as appendix 5 in project 2.

Project 2, appendix 3 appears to be missing

Project 2 appendix 3 in now complete

Appendix 6 is obviously a crucial document. However, I was left feeling that it was somewhat left to speak for itself. What were your claims: co-authorship, vision, management of the process? For such a high impact output, the claim in the narrative seems somewhat muted.

My role in this document coming to fruition was multi layered including the following:

Management of the process from the 'idea' put forward by the Scottish Government through to the practicalities of ensuring a quality publication. This involved overseeing each stage of the project as well as inserting my 'expert' knowledge in the field of child care and protection in the development of the content of the document.

I liaissed with a range of partners in the project, including the reference group members, at each stage to ensure a quality product was ultimately produced. This involved me

suggesting ideas to the reference group including engagement of the project team; the project approach; the layout and design of the product; distribution of the product,engagement with stakeholders regarding the product and final dissemination.

The original project came with a mandate but no blueprint for development. The final outcome was essentially to ensure that all social workers at the point of qualification had a good understanding of childcare and protection. The final product provides a mechanism for this to happen across all social work programmes. I recognised this vision, and through discussion with others, both on the reference group and within the project team, was able to provide a pathway to enable the outcome to be achieved. It could have been achieved in many different ways but I was also mindful of the tight timescales we were all working within. I drove the project towards one clear agreed pathway with the outcome firmly in mind whilst engaging with others to ensure it was an acceptable solution which would deliver a high quality outcome.

I am not sure why the ministerial forward (appendix 7) is included again given that it is already in appendix 6

This was just for impact and ease for the reader to see it clearly rather than have to search for it within the larger document. I take your point, it could have been referenced in one appendix.

The source of appendix 8 needs to be specified

I wrote the extract for the SSSC website during the project. An updated version can now be found on their website, http://ewd.sssc.uk.com/ewd/learning/social-work-degree-and-postgraduate-courses.html

Appendix 10 has a similar issue to 6. Given that you were not the author your role needs greater clarification and reflection in the narrative.

As stated my role within the consultation with key stakeholders was to design, develop and support the delivery of the key messages from the project. The notion of 'key messages' and how we wove those into all the work we did within the consultations was a new one to the project officers. They had not worked on a similar project where clear, concise messages had to consistently be reiterated in a variety of ways to diverse audiences. During project meetings we reflected on how we might impact these both implicitly and explicitly with different stakeholders. The introduction of what was eventually to become the Key Capabilities was, as I have indicated earlier, not welcomed by some important stakeholders. Therefore key messages such as this approach is being introduced, 'to improve outcomes for children and young people '(by helping student social workers focus on children within whatever setting they practice) and this approach stemmed from 'fatal enquiry reports/research providing us with robust evidence that social workers do not always recognise the needs of children'(Laming 2003; O'Brien 2003) were crucial to support this project.
Integral to my role was the support and supervision of the project officers to enable them, with confidence, to carry out their roles. Both were new to such project work and they had not worked so clearly on a national stage. The tasks involved within this project required them to do so and through each stage of consultation to be in a position to robustly defend their position ie the remit, requirements and desired outcomes of the project.

Through regular supervision and sometimes ad hoc contact, I worked with the team to develop a strategy, based on the key messages, to enhance confidence and improve

problem solving, presentation and report writing skills. On many occasions we were all reflecting (Schon1983) both in and on action as we were faced with new dilemmas and unanswered questions almost on a daily basis. The team needed to field aggression and think on their feet. As well as more formal and ad hoc supervision to oversee the direction of the project, I introduced co-coaching techniques to enable us to learn from one another. This approach recognised the joint expertise of the group and drew on our collective wisdom. It also recognises and values individual contributions and can build confidence (Whitworth et al 2009)

Finally, in respect of the consultation process, I supported the team by jointly preparing materials and physically attending some meetings. The balance of this was discussed as a group as it was important for me to show solidarity yet not undermine the abilities of the project team by co-running too many events. The balance (my attending about a quarter of events) was decided through joint negotiation.

On reflection, this aspect of the project was a steep learning curve for us as a project team and we were all surprised by the degree of hostility we faced from some quarters. With hindsight, I recognise I could have better prepared the team as I had been working largely on the national stage for over a year and had encountered similar situations. By anticipating and sharing my experiences and allowing the team to express their fears, thoughts and ways of coping, they may have had a more positive experience. On the other hand, their resilience increased and they noted at the end of the project how they were so much more robust having acquired new skills, insights and coping mechanisms.

Whilst interesting and potentially relevant, I'm not sure how appendix 12 relates to the specific claim it is being used to support

The link to the level 12 descriptor is in relation to 'identified and offered original insights into complex issues' in respect to gaining governmental approval. As project manager I had responsibility for the project outcomes/outputs to have impact. I firstly gained government approval for the KCs to be embedded into social work programmes (appendix 12) and then chose to present them in a similar format (and got further agreement to do this) as the SiSWE. This 'twinned track' approach was designed to support the idea that the KC and the SiSWE were connected and were to be applied together across HEI social work programmes. Attempting to embed the KC into social work programmes, as has been described, was a difficult challenge which required creative thinking and solutions on a range of fronts. The format and design of the final KC document being one of them.

Please check appendix 17. It looks as though it may have been compiled wrongly. Also, your specific role in the development of the pack needs clarification in the narrative.

Apologies, additional evidence, not used to support this claim was inadvertently filed alongside appendix 17. It has now been removed.

The workshop packs were jointly developed by the project team. The project officers' names were used on the website and publicity materials as they had, as has been discussed earlier, undertaken the majority of the consultation events and were familiar to the stakeholders. The idea to prepare materials on-line was born out of requests from stakeholders and support from the team. However, making this happen requires leadership and a vision, not only about how to achieve it but also what tasks will be completed by whom and when; where the information will be stored; what specific information might be helpful and how accessible will it become. All these questions require systematic analysis to allow a clear

project plan – the preparation of a workshop pack – to be realised. My role was to drive these tasks forward in collaboration with the team within tight timescales. The pack itself was compiled through the joint efforts of all the team, including myself and colleagues from the SSSC, administrative staff and some wider stakeholder partners. Apart from my role in this, my wider role was largely to co-ordinate the process, having created a clear timeline and designated specific tasks. The skills of negotiation and delegation as well as good time management enabled this part of the project to complete on time and I achieved this through 'coaching and modelling how to deal with complex problems'. Although this might not in itself be seen as a 'complex problem', the complexity exists in the ability to achieve collaborative practice across a range of stakeholders which can deliver a product, fit for purpose on time and within budget.

Project 3 was, in most ways more straightforward, mainly because of the slightly longer narrative and less reliance on appendices. However, it is a little frustrating that the key appendix (1) doesn't seem to carry your name anywhere! Whilst unfortunately, it's not untypical of in-house publications to omit some crucial bit of information, usually a date, I don't want to just infer your role. Can you clarify that you were the author/editor of the work?

The policy of the Institute of Research and Innovation in Social Services (IRISS), the organisation I worked for when completing this work, had a policy of non identification of specific individuals on project outputs.
I can confirm that I was the sole author of the publication and carried out all the research, analysis and writing myself as well as compiling the final product. This involved a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding of specific people, systems and approaches.

I have however, now included verification from a senior manager at Perth and Kinross Council who commissioned the work from IRISS. I worked closely with him throughout the process in relation to setting the parameters of the commission, reporting staged progress and signing off the final publication prior to distribution. (Project 3, Appendix 7)

Project 4 needs, I think, to focus solely on the book chapter. It's not clear that any of the rest of the material is sufficiently substantial to warrant a level 12 claim. Neither does it seem necessary given the overall portfolio.

'*Completing the chapter has allowed new ideas to be accessed by a wide audience of students, practitioners and academics.*' (extract from Book Chapter narrative, p3, in RPL claim)
Communicating complex ideas at appropriate levels to a diverse audience required detailed selection and analysis of the materials used within the chapter. A case study approach was chosen to allow a continuing thread to be woven throughout, using the story of a family that people reading the information could professionally identify with. A description of each family member was introduced initially and prior to a wider discussion about the principles and skills of assessment and how these could be applied to different family members as the chapter progressed. The family dynamics were sufficiently complex to allow a wide range of interventions to be discussed and the tools introduced within the chapter to be applied in different formats. Key principles about adopting an holistic approach to assessment; working collaboratively with family members and other professionals; critically evaluating available assessment tools and working systematically through a process were clearly highlighted.

The 'family' were used throughout to illustrate the systematic approach required to complete a competent assessment, using cycles of reflection and action. Sets of questions were posed at each cyclical stage to support the reader's thinking about what information might be

required to allow them to make informed judgements. The questions were designed, not only to support information gathering but also to question assumptions that might impede clear judgement, eg,

'What assumptions are being made and by whom, for example, in relation to past requests for support, current circumstances, 'norms and stereotypes' Chapter 16:p224)

A strong focus was placed on the reflective stages, seeking to encourage the reader to take time to assess information prior to action. The reflective phase provides quality assurance, by allowing workers to step back and assess the situation. Compton et al (2005) caution however, that workers can never fully understand what others are saying, doing or feeling and should not attempt to do so' Again, clear evidence from child care and protection enquiries (Laming 2003: O'Brien 2003) have indicated that social workers, and other professionals, have often been quick to act before appraising themselves not only of all the facts but before they have evaluated and made sense of presenting information.

The questions posed at both the reflection and action stages direct the reader towards divergent rather than convergent thinking which encourages open thinking, and again an ability to analyse factual information prior to making informed judgements on as much information as is reasonably possible.

A case study approach allows for simplicity, in that the characters (family members) can be re-introduced throughout the chapter to reinforce key messages and help the reader, 'get to know the characters'. Additionally a case study approach acts as a vehicle to weave more complex ideas together, for example, it allows attention to be directed to the importance of inter-professional collaboration by asking the reader to reflect on such issues,

'Who will continue work with the individuals within the family, if continuing involvement is agreed – drugs team, GP, social worker, health visitor and so on? (Book Chapter: p226)

Although this point could be made as a general point within the chapter, (ie, the importance of inter-professional collaboration during any assessment process) by relating it to a family already identified, it has more resonance as the range of professionals identified are less random and more likely to be available to meet the needs of this specific 'family'

This ability to blend both simplistic and complex ideas within a short chapter (20 pages) I would argue is the essence of this being at SCQF level 12 evidencing an ability to communicate to a range of audiences and adapt communication to the context and purpose. The multi-layering of ideas would suggest its applicability to diverse audience.

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